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THE

TRIAL

OF

THE UNITARIANS,

FOR

A LIBEL

ON

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

George Wilkins

יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד

Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.

Deut. vi. 4.

Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν Κύριος εἷς ἐστί.

The Lord our God is one Lord.

Mark, xii. 29.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1830.

LONDON:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND

CHARLES JAMES BLOMFIELD, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON,

A PRELATE,

ALIKE CHARACTERISED BY

UNAFFECTED PIETY, PROFOUND LEARNING, AND

JUDICIOUS ZEAL,

IS

THIS VOLUME

INSCRIBED.

TRIAL.

THE KING

versus

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, AND HENRY BELSHAM.

On an Ex-officio Information, charging them, severally, with the Publication of

A LIBEL ON THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

In Trinity Term.
Before the Lord Chief Justice and a *special* Jury.

The Defendants being called upon their recognisances to appear, came forward to answer an Information charging them; first, with an attempt to uproot Christianity and to plant Deism; and in another count, with the publication of scandalous libels on the Christian Religion, the Religion of the State as by Law established, in certain false, profane, and blasphemous writings, with intent to excite untrue and dangerous notions of religion; — to which they severally pleaded, "*Not Guilty.*"

The Jury empanneled and sworn were —

Isaac Newton, — *John Bacon*, — *John Locke*, — *Robert Boyle*, — *Soame Jenyns*, — *Robert Nelson*, — *Henry Hyde*, — *George Lyttleton*, — *Henry West*, — *Joseph Addison*, — *Richard Steele*, — *Samuel Johnson*.

The Attorney-General then rose: —

May it please your Lordship! Gentlemen of the Jury! This Information is filed against the Defendants, charging them; first, with printing and publishing works by which they have attempted to uproot Christianity, and upon the ruins of it to build up a system of Deism; and next, with publishing scandalous libels on the doctrines of the Christian Religion, the Established Religion of this Realm, with intent to excite false and dangerous notions of such Religion in the minds of His Majesty's liege subjects. Now, Gentlemen, with respect to the first part of this Information, in which these persons are charged with a conspiracy to uproot the Christian religion, and to plant Paganism on the ruins of it, it is only necessary, simply to ask; What is Christianity? and, I think, you will not hesitate one moment in saying with me, that it is the religion of Jesus Christ, the divine Saviour of man, and that mankind are called and designated Christians, from the God whom they worship; and therefore, that they who deny Christ to be their God, and do not worship Him with divine

honour, cannot, with any propriety of speech, be called *Christians;* it being neither just nor reasonable to denominate any one a Christian who merely believes Christ as a human teacher; for I affirm the common acceptation of the title of "Christian" to apply to those, and to those only, who acknowledge *Christ* for their *God.* With respect to the first charge made against the Defendants, of attempting to substitute Paganism for Christianity; it would be easy to support this, by showing that an impious attempt has been made by these mistaken men to melt down the Christian religion into the dross of Mahomedanism, and that in this they have so far succeeded, that they and the Mahomedans have come to these common terms — namely, that they both believe Christ to have been the Messiah, and the revealer of God to man; that he was a true prophet; that he gave sight to the blind, healed the lame, and raised the dead; and that what he taught was truth. Indeed, it is a matter upon record, that an eminent leader and chief propagator of the Socinian heresy in the Palatinate, Adam Neuser, minister of the Church of Heidelberg, began in Unitarianism, and finished his career by turning Mahomedan, and underwent the rites at Constantinople; and what has happened in this way may occur again, particularly among those who are less able to understand the system. This result is not, perhaps, so much to

be deprecated, since, of the two systems, the Mahomedan is the nearest to Christianity, for it embraces the belief that Christ was the WORD of God; that He is the intercessor between God and man; and that He was conceived and miraculously born of a virgin: and, Gentlemen, if any of you have ever taken up the volume of the Alcoran, you will have found, in the early parts of it, that none are to be accounted true Mussulmans, who do not believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God.[1] Now, in all these several points of Mahomedan belief, the disciples of the Impostor excel the Unitarians, and out-run them in the nearness of their approach to Christianity: nor must it be forgotten, that it was principally on account of this adherence on the part of the Mahomedans to the writings of the Old and New Testaments, that the negotiation, opened by the English Unitarians, in the reign of Charles the Second, with the ambassador of the emperor of Morocco, to form an alliance with the Mahomedans for a more extensive propagation of Unitarian principles, failed. If, then, it be admitted that the Mahomedans are Pagans, and that they are opposed to Christians and Christianity, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that much more so are the Unitarians, the Defendants and their adherents.

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[1] See Horsley's sixteenth letter to Priestley. See Sale's Koran, ch. 3, 4, and 5.

But, my Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury, it is not my intention to proceed in this trial upon the first count of this Information, but to rely on the second, as that which furnishes more extensive and certain ground for expecting your verdict on this prosecution, — a prosecution, let me say, carried on in no spirit of vindictive feeling towards any of the persons before you, but with the aim of protecting the public against, what I am fully prepared to show, their pernicious and blasphemous writings.

Gentlemen, — It is hardly necessary for me to tell you, that the doctrines of our National Church, and more particularly that which is explained in the first article of our faith respecting the holy and undivided Trinity, is a part or parcel of the statute laws of the realm; and that to attempt to turn the minds of his Majesty's subjects against the admission of them, proved true by the warrant of Scripture; or to attempt to lessen their importance, by withdrawing from them their only support, the evidence of the word of God, constitute a very serious offence. With this offence, grave and awful as it is, the Defendants stand charged; and it devolves on me, as the Officer of the Crown, to bring to merited punishment those who impugn the Christian Religion.

In all Christian countries it is necessary that some form of public worship to the Creator should exist: in England it has been established by statute,

in the reign of Charles the Second, that if any man, in writing, reviles, scoffs, or ridicules it, by the Law of the land he is guilty of a libel. Now, to deny the Holy Trinity, by an attempt to show that our blessed Saviour was not a divine but a human being, is taking away the corner-stone on which the beautiful and sacred edifice of Christianity rests, and is *reviling* the sacred character of its Author; and an attempt to rob this Being of that divinity which is his own, and to hold him out as a mere human creature, and as an unworthy and improper object of worship, is to *scoff* at his high claims, if not to *ridicule* them. The Information charges the Defendants with devising, and intending to excite by these means, in the minds of the King's subjects, false and dangerous notions of religion.

By some, perhaps, it may be thought that such prosecutions as the present are a direct infringement upon that natural law of toleration, which permits every man to worship God in the manner his conscience prescribes. For the establishment and force of this law, I am at all times, and upon every occasion, the firm and decided advocate; and, indeed, in this happy country, it is both the privilege and enjoyment of every individual to seek his God in the way, and after the manner, which he honestly believes and feels to be his duty. Happily for us, we have no such edicts

as those which were passed in Babylon of old, nor such monarchs as Nebuchadnezzar, to decree a prescribed, unauthorised worship to their subjects, with the penalty of death to such as should refuse to embrace it: but, at the same time, it is a law which is no less natural than just, that the Established Religion of a State or Nation, if not imposed as an obligatory duty upon every subject, is so far to be reverenced, that none may wantonly charge falsehood upon its doctrines with impunity, when those doctrines are thought by the wise and good to have a heavenly sanction; and none can attempt to subvert these, without incurring the risk of a just degree of punishment. If any there be, who from tenderness of conscience scruple to receive this religion, they are at perfect liberty to dissent from it; they are at liberty to state and publish the reasons of their secession; provided, in so doing, they do not shock the feelings, nor attempt to shake the public faith, by offensive and impious statements, or by throwing ridicule upon what the country at large holds sacred. I will even go further than this; — I will admit that any sect may lawfully promulgate, in a rational and serious manner, their objections even to the established, authorised Religion of the Nation: our laws permit every individual *et sentire quæ velit, et quæ sentiat, dicere;* and that they may advance any reasonable arguments against the

truth of it, if such be the unfeigned and conscientious belief of the party in question, and if their objections be stated with that decorum and feeling which is due to the sensibility of all who as conscientiously differ from them: for if the National Religion be not strictly conformable to Holy Writ; if its doctrines be the mere phantoms and hallucinations of the brain, and not the teachings of God's Holy word and Spirit; then let those doctrines and that religion fall, and fall under the weapons of those, who shall succeed in proving their spuriousness; then let another system be substituted, which has higher and better evidences of truth: but, until this be actually and satisfactorily done, we cannot quietly submit to the dictum of those who set up a mode of interpretation peculiar to themselves, and which has not the sanction of legitimate and critical learning to support it. For such persons as these to publish protests against our faith, to impugn its evidences, and to deny as true those portions of Holy Writ which they cannot prove false, and who only brand as spurious, those parts and passages of Scripture which clash with their pre-conceived opinions; amounts, in my humble opinion, to direct blasphemy, inasmuch as they unblushingly assert portions of that sacred volume, which no one has ever yet shown to be other than the word of God, to be a cheat and invention of designing

men; and denounce those as no better than dupes to the delusion — dupes in the awful matter of their eternal salvation, who ground their faith on such a foundation.

Gentlemen, — I am well aware that the present age lays claim to the acquisition of deeper and a more general knowledge, and to a liberality more extensive than has, at any previous time, marked the intellectual advancement of any people; but before we admit the truth of this, it becomes us to distinguish between *liberality* and *innovation*; and with respect to knowledge, it is proper to enter into the distinction between *learning* and *science*. The progress of the arts and sciences has carried with it a curiosity and an enterprise, which lead their votaries to see blemishes in every thing long established, and to betray a nervous impatience to move rapidly onwards in the course which restless men are hurrying on whatever has hitherto been fixed. I will not, for it is impossible that I should, deny that the world, and the things of the world, cannot always remain stationary, or that experience and insight do not produce knowledge and sagacity, and that this increase of mental power and energy leads to improvement in all things; but it is, at the same time, essential to guard against the precipitation into which a presumption of great intellectual advancement is apt to carry the minds of men. He that hasteth to

be wise, is almost as liable to overshoot the mark, as he who "hasteth to become rich." Great and permanent improvement is the result of cool deliberation and persevering industry, not of a feverish and impatient excitement. I am ready to admit that the rapid progress of intellect, of which we now hear so much, is justly the boast of the scientific world; but I have never yet seen the connection pointed out between any modern improvements in science, and the new doctrines of reformers in theology. We are certainly much improved, for instance, in the art of making time-keepers, above those who lived a hundred years ago; but no man will say, that we thence derive any advantage for numbering our days more wisely, or that we have any clearer ideas of eternity than we had before. An eminent artist in this way may doubt of the Apostles' Creed; but there is no visible relation between his art and his unbelief. The conceit of superior learning has always had an ill effect upon Christianity; and is frequently found in those who have no great parts upon which to pride themselves. We may be as learned as we can make ourselves, and yet continue good Christians; because true learning and true religion were never yet at variance; but the moment we are vain of our learning, we begin to be in danger, and some folly or other is not far off. The Greeks were unfit to receive the Gos-

pel, because they boasted of a sort of wisdom, between which and the wisdom of the Gospel there is no affinity. They delighted to speak of little things in great words; while they who first published the Christian faith, propounded to the world the highest objects in the plainest language. Hence it has been observed, that persons in the same state of life with the Apostles of Jesus Christ have attained to a great understanding of sacred things, while some scholars of high pretensions have betrayed great dulness and misconception in respect to the same: for our religion ever had, and ever will have, some things which are hidden from those who are wise and prudent in their own estimation, and are revealed to persons of teachable, child-like dispositions. The natural and adequate effect of all knowledge, when rightly used, is to make men wiser; but the affectation and abuse of learning have a contrary effect.[1]

Gentlemen,—There is no subject on which mankind are properly more tenacious, than that of their religious faith. There is nothing which they bear with less patience than the sarcasms which unfeeling, or the levities which trifling, minds throw out against their religious sentiments; for, of all subjects, it is indisputably the most important, because the concerns of it not only mainly affect us

[1] Bishop Horne's Charge to the Clergy of Norwich.

while we dwell on earth, but its momentous interests extend to another and to an eternal state of existence; and if the prospects and hopes of immortality, a blessed immortality, be blighted by finding that they have been vainly sought, or that the conditions upon which we have been led to attain them are untrue, and not real, there is then prepared for the mind a bitterness which brings on sickness and despair, — a bitterness which renders our being a curse instead of a blessing, and tends to make the author of it despised rather than adored. It is, therefore, the first duty of every nation to set forth and establish a religion which the best and most learned of its luminaries, on the surest grounds, conceive to be true, and the truth of which the experience of ages and the consent of mankind have confirmed. Indeed, the responsibility is dreadfully awful, which imposes upon a government the propriety of establishing a public form of worship for the moral and spiritual benefit of the community over which it presides: and as this responsibility is surely the most fearful, what must be that of those who impugn and weaken it, unless they can produce reasons and arguments strong and weighty for their contrary opinions. The government, as the guardian of the uninformed and ignorant of the land, steps in, as in the present instance, between them and the promulgers of unholy doctrines, to screen them from imposition

and delusion; and as it possesses the power to give a form of worship, so it has the ardent desire that the people committed to its charge may enjoy, and be secured in the enjoyment of, all the advantages and comforts which flow from a true and genuine religion. If other classes of the community have the power of investigating these things, and can form satisfactory, though different, opinions as to what they feel called upon to believe, they are left to the guidance of their own discretion, and they may, for the benefit of others capable of forming conclusions in these high matters, publish and declare the motives and arguments by which they have been led to differ from the mass around them, provided, as I have before observed, they do so in a manner, and by such means, as are rational, serious, and inoffensive. While they thus act, the State holds out protection to them in the public exercise of their peculiar form of worship: but if they quit the limits thus fairly prescribed, and go forth to the public, declaring the national religion, — the Christian religion, false; and attempt to poison the minds of the discontented and factious, or unsettle and disturb those of the great aggregate of the community, who have not the power nor the opportunity to discriminate between the true and false; and in doing so, declare Scripture, which is the foundation and rock upon which the Church of Christ is built, to be in many parts fictitious,

and not the word of God; — then, among the ignorant and uninstructed, doubts are immediately raised as to what they ought to believe — the current of their consolatory hopes is stopped by a barrier which they cannot remove; and distrust, despair, and impiety, follow as the natural consequences of these declarations.

I am aware that, among many, an opinion prevails, that it would be better for the Legislature to permit works of an impious and blasphemous description to pass unnoticed, and to leave the principles thus propagated to be refuted by those to whom the charge of preserving true principles of religion is committed, or by others who have a zeal and knowledge of divine things: but in my view of the case, it is with the utmost propriety that the Legislature retains the power of inflicting punishment for notorious scandals upon our religion, and especially when our adversaries depart from the course of regular and legitimate reasoning, and have recourse to light and indecent ribaldry in assailing the received doctrines of Christianity: and though it is not my intention to accuse the defendants as guilty in this respect, I do not hesitate to place this offence to the necessary effects of their writings; and sure I am, that the Legislature will never be backward in effectually protecting from ridicule and insult those sacred truths which are, and have been received

with reverence and awe by the great body of Christians in all ages and countries. The Law will not sanction blasphemy, — the Law is the guardian of our religion, and will not suffer the Christian faith to be wounded and maimed; but upon all occasions of great and momentous import, when Christianity is wilfully and impiously assailed, will punish the delinquents, I do not say with severity, but in such a manner as to show a proper and due sense of veneration and respect for what is truly esteemed holy and sacred. We have many laws on our statute books which are seldom if ever put in force; if, then, it be asked, Why retain what is obsolete and unserviceable? I reply, That it is wise to permit them to remain, if it be only to show what is the spirit of our laws; — to show that they discountenance, if they do not punish, offences of this nature; and it is with the same view of *discouraging* blasphemy, rather than of *punishing* or treating it with any sort of severity, that the Defendants are now brought before you. Surely, when men with bold effrontery come forward, and, with the aid of great but perverted talents, assail the strong holds of Christianity, representing adoration to its Author as impious, and our belief in him as blasphemous; when they openly charge us with dishonesty in adding to the Book of Life, while they are heedless of the curse on those who take aught from

it[1]; and represent us as unwise and foolish in our interpretation of it, as Heathens and Polytheists; and all this, under the colour of profound reading, liberal sentiments, and enlarged capacity of reasoning; — if this torrent of misrepresentation and error be not checked by some sort of public disapproval and censure; who is to calculate upon the effects which such infidelity must produce upon the moral conduct and religious feeling of a people? It is here, then, that I again repel the charge of a narrow and persecuting spirit, in bringing the present prosecution, which I urge, not against the arraigned as individuals, but against their principles, — principles pernicious and impious, tending to the substitution of a cold morality, and blighting Deism, for all the glorious blessings and privileges of Christianity.

From the pernicious doctrines which the persons before you have promulged, a sect has recently sprung up, who, under the name of "Free-thinking

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[1] If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, &c. — Rev. xxii. 19.

"It is true," says Doddridge, "this particularly refers to the *book of the Revelation;* but the parity of reason extending to other books, I doubt not the terror of the threatening does so too." . . "I think this passage should make men very cautious, that they may not rashly incur any censure on this account; though, undoubtedly, the terror of the threatening is planted against any *designed* erasement or addition."

Christians," have grossly libelled our National Church, as professing a religion which has no other claim than that of being "by law established," — "as a Church whose ministers and pastors are servants of the State only; who retain their office, titles, and privileges, in *opposition* to the clear and express commands of Jesus; — as a Church whose laws have no earlier date than Popery, no higher authority than Acts of Parliament; — as a Church whose *unrighteous claims* are supported by an appeal to the hopes and fears of men; — and, as a Church whose unscriptural faith is fulminated by means of a creed, which is at the same time intolerant in its spirit, and contradictory in its assertions." [1]

Gentlemen. When a religious sect adopts the title of "Free-thinkers," it is time to look about us, because we all know what Free-thinkers have done, and what it is that they are prepared to do under this revolutionary signal. The times must be lax indeed which will suffer men boldly and daringly to avow free-thinking and democratical principles, and, under the cover of conscientious scruples, to libel all that we hold most sacred. Religion has too frequently been used as a cloak to conceal the most ungodly designs, and we have too much rea-

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[1] See the particulars of the infidelity of this sect, as detailed in their petition to the House of Commons in 1827, which is inserted in the Appendix to this volume.

son, from past experience, to suspect that the Free-thinkers of these days may not be so different from those of former times as the liberality of this age, in its boasted intellectual advancement, may be disposed to admit. Free-thinkers, hitherto, have been Atheists, Deists, and Revolutionists. These allege, indeed, that "they receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as containing the revealed word of God, and therefore they are not Atheists;" but whether by "the Scriptures" they mean all and every part of those sacred, canonical books which we receive, is doubtful; and, therefore, though not Atheists, they may be Deists: and that they are so, may be inferred from setting forth in the development of their disbelief, that "the worship of the *man* Jesus is idolatrous, and that the worship of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, is the worship of a plurality of Gods, open and avowed Polytheism, and a Polytheism both contrary to the laws of God and our country. That they are Revolutionists also, is, I think, proved upon their own showing, when they declare that they "regard the connection of Religion with the State as the primary cause of the grievances which they suffer, and as having mainly contributed to the corruption of revealed religion:" and hence they implore the Legislature "to put an end to the connection between Church and Sstate." And who are these men that would alter the government,

and denounce our ritual "as false and superstitious, and our Church as having its foundation in Rome, *a superstructure of ignorance and mystery, of Heathenism and Popery?*" Who? but they who "profess an equality of rights;" among whom are "no religious titles nor distinctions; and whose aim is to level all things," denying the right of the civil magistrate to *interfere* in religion, alleging that they are justified in such denial by the example of St. Peter and St. John, who, when the Jewish rulers threatened them if they preached Christ crucified, demanded, "whether it were right in the sight of God to hearken unto them, more than unto God." Now, Gentlemen, you are as well aware as I am, that the Apostles put this question to those who would not permit the name of Jesus to be preached: here the Legislature supports the Apostles, and says that that name shall not be blasphemed; for that divine Master commanded them and all his disciples to "be subject to the higher powers," and "to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake," in accordance with the proof which he had given them, that his religion was not intended to interfere with the established government of the country, when he ordered them to pay tribute-money, and to render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's. We too, like the Apostles, deny that our sovereign, or chief ruler, or magistrate, has the power to administer God's words and sacraments,

in right of his sovereignty or office; but we hold that he is the supreme Head of our Church over all persons and things, and in all causes ecclesiastical as well as civil: and that it is necessary that he should be invested with this power, for the maintenance of public tranquillity, and for the due administration of public justice. That the heretical and deistical spirit of these men spring, in the first instance, from the writings of the Defendants, I am now prepared to show; and in order to substantiate the charge upon the record, I proceed to adduce the strongest evidence in support of this prosecution, by bringing before you witnesses of no common stamp, — men of honour, learning, and sound integrity, — such as are incapable of entertaining prejudices, or of permitting any feeling to prevail in the support of the charge, but such as springs from the purest motives of rectitude, and the most ardent love of truth. I am aware that I have a task of some difficulty to perform, — a task which I would fain were intrusted to better hands than mine: for I am free to confess, that though born and educated in the principles of our national faith, and alive to the duties, as well as to the comforts and blessings of our holy religion, I am am not so well nor so extensively acquainted with the various parts of the divine law, and with those several particulars of doctrine and precept, nor with that critical knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, as those

who by their profession have devoted their lives to the study and acquisition of these high matters. I have, however, the satisfaction to feel assured, that the truth and goodness of the cause, which I feel it my duty to vindicate, will suffer nothing from my ignorance; for the evidence which I have to adduce is brought by those who are able to give it in the clearest manner, and, what to me is not less consolatory, it will be met and sifted by those who have given sufficient proof of their power to defend themselves: for I have learnt, since my coming into court, that the cause of the accused is to be defended by themselves. In this I think they have rightly judged, for none are more able to explain their conduct and belief; and none, I am inclined to think, can act with greater, though mistaken sincerity than themselves. Aided also by the knowledge of his Lordship, which is confessedly very extensive, both in respect to the divine law and the law of the land, they will have in him all the advantages of an advocate, and at the same time the assurance from his general character that, as he is above all prejudice, and incapable of being swayed from the strict line of his duty by any partial or party feelings, there presides a judge on this tribunal, whose veneration for that greater Judge who is hereafter to try him at the bar of Heaven, will not permit him to forget that he stands between the people of this Nation

and their God; and that the responsibility in the full discharge of his duty is, therefore, most awful. Gentlemen, I shall confidently bring this enquiry before you, and leave the issue of it in your hands, persuaded that any cause, whether public or private, cannot be in greater security than when it is committed to the keeping, or hangs upon the decision, of men whose characters, deserved fame, and conscientious principles, are an ample guarantee for the just and due discharge of their duty. — Call Samuel Horsley.

Crier. He is sworn.

Examined by the Attorney-General: —

Att. Gen. Your name, sir, I think is Horsley?

Witness. It is.

Att. Gen. Do you know any thing of a book entitled "The Corruptions of Christianity?"

Witness. I do, sir: I know it to have been written by Thomas Priestley, one of the defendants.

Priestley. To save the time of the Court, I admit that I am the author of that work.

Att. Gen. Very good. Pray then, sir, inform the gentlemen of the jury of the nature of that work.

Witness. The object of it is to throw discredit upon the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, by denying that it has any existence in Scripture, or that either the Scriptures, or the belief of the primitive Christians, afford any support to the truth of it. It attempts to prove that the doctrine, in the form in which it

is now maintained, is of no greater antiquity than the Nicene Council; — that it is a gradual corruption of the doctrine of the Gospel, which took its rise in an opinion *first* advanced in the *second century* by converts from the Platonic school; — that before this innovation, of which Justin Martyr is made the author, the faith of the whole Christian Church, and particularly of the Church of Jerusalem, was simply and strictly Unitarian; — that the *immediate disciples of the Apostles* conceived our Saviour to be a man, whose existence commenced in the womb of Mary; — that they thought him in no respect an object of worship [1]; — that the next succeeding race worshipped him, indeed, but they had no higher notions of his divinity than those which are maintained by the followers of Arius in the fourth century.[2] Thus, by the declaration that the primitive Christians were Unitarians, and their followers, to the fourth century, Arians, have the defendants attempted to level, and too fatally succeeded in striking, a blow which aims to dispossess that Being of divinity, " who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, although he made himself

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[1] The doctrine of our Lord's mere humanity is the clear doctrine of the Scriptures, and the apostles never taught any other. — Hist. of Corr. vol. i. p. 6.

[2] See Horsley's Charge to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of St. Albans.

of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."

Judge. Defendant, — I shall take it as admitted that this and any other statement here made of your work by the witnesses is correct, where you do not interpose to deny it. In what year did the Nicene Council assemble?

Witness. In the year 325.

Att. Gen. Is the assumption that the faith of the first Christians was simply and strictly Unitarian true or not?

Witness. Decidedly untrue; for it was the evident object of St. John to guard against the possibility of mistaking the divine original of Christ in his decisive statement, that he was the divine WORD or *Logos* that had existed from all eternity; and Ignatius, the disciple of St. John, here states in the page now open before me, in terms highly figurative, I will allow, but perfectly unequivocal, the WORD or Logos to be a distinct person from the Father. "There is one God, who hath manifested himself through Jesus Christ his Son, who is his eternal Son, who came not forth from silence [1];" meaning thereby, that the Son's existence holds not of the Father by any such remote relation as the fabulous genealogies describe; but he is the eternal Logos of the paternal mind.

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[1] Ign. ad Magn., sect. 8.

Again, Clemens Romanus, the fellow-labourer of St. Paul [1], says, speaking of Christ, "The sceptre of the majesty of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, came not in the pomp of pride or arrogance, *although he had it in his power.*" [2] And if Christ had the power of coming into the world in what manner he pleased, he was a Divine Being; and this exactly coincides with what St. John says, — "Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ *is come in the flesh*, is of God." Now, had Christ been a mere man, in what other way could he have come than *in the flesh?* and yet Priestley says, that Clemens, when speaking in the highest terms concerning Christ, only calls him "the sceptre of the majesty of God;" whereas both he and the Apostle, his fellow-labourer, declare that he *came in the flesh;* or, as another Apostle has it, "in the likeness of men." St. John, therefore, with great truth and reason, sets forth this as the cardinal doctrine of Christianity; insomuch that he speaks of the belief of this article as the accomplishment of our Christian warfare; the attainment, at least, of that faith which with certainty overcometh the world. "This," he says, "is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." Then he adds, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

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[1] Vide Phil. iv. 3.

[2] Ep. 1. ch. 16.

"Son of God" is a title that belongs to our Lord in his human character, describing him as that man who became The Son of God by union with the Godhead; as "Son of Man," on the contrary, is a title which belongs to the Eternal WORD, describing that person of the Godhead who was made man by uniting himself to the man Jesus. To believe, therefore, that Jesus is The Son of God, is to believe that he is God himself incarnate. This the Apostle says, is the faith which overcometh the world; inspiring the Christian with fortitude to surmount the temptations of the world, in whatever shape they may assail him. On the other hand, the denial of this great truth, so animating to the believer's hopes, he represents as the beginning of that apostacy which is to come to its height in the latter ages, as one of the characters of Antichrist. "Ye have heard," he says, "that Antichrist shall come: even now there are many Antichrists. Who is a liar, but he that denieth the Father and Son?" And again, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of Antichrist whereof ye have heard that it should come, and now already is it in the world." "The Christ" is a name properly alluding to the inauguration of the Redeemer to his triple office of Prophet, Priest,

and King, by the unction from above: but in the phraseology of the heretics of the Apostolic age, it was used as a name of that Divine Being with whom we maintain, but they denied, an union with the man Jesus. To deny that Jesus is the Christ was, in their sense of the word "Christ," to deny that he is The Son of God, or God incarnate. He that denieth this, says the Apostle, is a liar, and is Antichrist. Two remarkable sects of these lying Antichrists arose in the Apostles' days — the sect of the Cerinthian heretics, who denied the divinity of our Saviour; and the sect of the Docetæ, who denied his manhood, maintaining that the body of Jesus, and every thing he appeared to do and suffer in it, was mere illusion. Thus, both equally denied the incarnation; both, therefore, equally were liars and Antichrists: and to give equal and direct contradiction to the lies of both, St. John delivers the truth in these terms, that "Jesus is the Christ come in the flesh."[1]

Att. Gen. Now, sir, inform us, whether it be true that the primitive Church of Jerusalem was strictly Unitarian, maintaining the simple humanity of Christ?

Witness. It is first necessary for me to state, that the Jews at Jerusalem, who were first converted to Christianity, are designated "the Hebrews," or

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[1] Horsley's Sermons, vol. i. p. 175.

" they of the Circumcision;" and they, together with James, the brother of our Lord, their bishop, constituted the primitive church of Jerusalem; that original parent church, the mother of us all. When the emperor Adrian drove the Jews from Jerusalem, the descendants of these Hebrew Christians settled in the northern parts of Galilee, and became heretics in one particular, by maintaining the necessity of the observance of the Mosaic law for the attainment of salvation under the Gospel, and were then called *Nazarenes.* After them arose another sect, called *Ebionites.* Now, the author of the Corruptions of Christianity confounds these two sects together, and calls them " Hebrew Christians;" and he says, with respect to them, " You will find no trace in history that they believed Christ to be any thing more than man." [1] It may be true that this author has not been able to discover in history, that the Nazarenes believed Christ any other than a man; but I affirm, that there is hardly any fact in the early history of the church more clearly established than the distinction between the Nazarenes and Ebionites: both of whom maintained the opinion of the orthodoxy of the proper Nazarenes in the article of our Lord's divinity. It is evident, therefore, that these sects were not the same with the

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[1] Letters to Dr. Horsley, p. 32.

Hebrew Christians who composed the primitive church of Jerusalem.

Att. Gen. You deny the primitive church of Jerusalem to have been Unitarian: when, and how, do you say that Unitarianism commenced?

Witness. Cerinthus, who was contemporary with St. John, taught, that to Christ born as a man was added an angelic being: that this union was interrupted at the crucifixion and at the time of our Lord's interment, but was restored after the resurrection; and, being restored, it rendered the man Jesus an object of divine honour: and this, Tertullian says, was a heresy, and a heresy it was considered when Cerinthus lived [1], which proves that the divinity of Christ was the orthodox doctrine. Now Ebion, from whom the Ebionites took their name, is declared by Epiphanius and Irenæus to have held the Cerinthian doctrine or heresy respecting Christ; consequently, he worshipped Christ as a deified man. From the time of Cerinthus to the year 190, the Ebionites do not appear to have gone further than the denial of our Lord's original divinity, when Theodotus the apostate, the tanner of Byzantium, came to Rome and preached the doctrine of Antichrist, and probably first taught the *mere humanity* of Christ; for there is no evidence to prove that Christ was not worshipped by the

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[1] De Præscript. Hæret. c. 48. p. 221.

Ebionites; and as all innovations have a progress, and the divinity of Christ was the belief, and the worship of Christ was the practice, of the first ages, it is probable that presumptuous men would begin to question the ground on which his claim to worship might be thought to stand, before they abandoned the worship to which they had been so long habituated. I would ask, has not this been the progress of the corruption in latter times? Socinus, although he denied the original divinity of our Lord, was nevertheless a worshipper of Christ, and a strenuous asserter of his claim to worship. It was left to others to build upon the foundation which Socinus laid, and to bring the Unitarian doctrine to the goodly form in which the present age beholds it.

Court. Well, well. — But was the divinity of Christ the belief of the Apostles? first show that.

Att. Gen. That, my Lord, has been proved by what the witness has adduced from St. John.

Court. That is but a solitary instance. The witness has gone no further than to say, that the divinity of Christ was the belief of the primitive church of Jerusalem; but it is necessary to show more than this, — that it was the original faith.

Witness. My Lord, this is a wide field in which the believer in the divinity of Christ may long expatiate, and with delight. St. Peter, in his first sermon on the day of Pentecost, declares publicly

to the people of Israel, that Jesus, whom they had crucified and slain, was raised up from the grave by God; "having loosed the pains of death, for it was not possible that he should be holden of it." And here, let me ask, who was this that it was impossible for the bonds of death to hold? Not the mere man, Jesus of Nazareth, for all men are subject to, and are to be holden of, death;—no, it was Christ the divine Redeemer of mankind,—that divine Being who was superior to all the powers of death and hell: He, who shed forth upon his Apostles on this day the Holy Spirit from the place of his exaltation on the right hand of God, having received the promise of the Holy Ghost from the Father. My Lord, I will also insist that the blessed Stephen died a martyr to the *deity* of Christ. The accusation which the Defendants say was brought against him, was his "speaking blasphemous words against the Temple and the Law." The accusation which the Jews brought against him, says the Apostle, was also a charge of blasphemy against Moses and against God.[1] And what was this blasphemy? It was probably a prediction that the Temple was to be destroyed, and the ritual of Law, of course, abolished. The blasphemy against Moses was probably his assertion that the authority of Moses was inferior to

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[1] Acts, vi. 11.

that of Christ. But what could be the blasphemy against God? What, except it were this; that he ascribed divinity to one who suffered publicly as a malefactor? That this was the crime of the blessed Stephen cannot be doubted, when the conclusion of the story is considered. "While," says the inspired historian, "he looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God,"—that is, he saw the splendour of the Shechinah, for that is what is meant when the glory of God is mentioned as something to be seen,—"and he saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God[1];" the man Jesus in the midst of the light. The Jewish rabble understood his declaration of seeing Jesus in the divine glory as an assertion of his divinity; they, therefore, stopped their ears; they overpowered his voice with clamours, and hurried him out of the city, to inflict upon him the death which the law appointed for blasphemers.[2] The holy man died as he had lived, attesting the deity of his crucified Master. His last breath was uttered in a prayer to Jesus, first for himself, and then for his murderers,—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."[3]

Court. Are not the words in our version, "They stoned Stephen calling upon *God?*"

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[1] Acts, vii. 55. [2] Acts, vii. 57, 58.

[3] Horsley's Letter XII. to Priestley.

Witness. They are, my Lord.

Court. And the word "*God*" I perceive to be in italics, by which I understand it to be supplied by the translators, and that it is not in the original text.

Witness. It certainly is not in the original text, but the force and the true rendering of the passage in the original is, "They stoned Stephen, *invocating* and saying, Lord Jesus."[1]

Court. That may be the better way of rendering it, but I shall not take it as evidence against Priestley.

Witness. My Lord, I do not desire that you should; it is sufficient for us to know that our version gives the full and correct sense of the original; and it will equally answer the purpose of my testimony, to consider, that, at all events, a prayer was made by the martyr Stephen in his last agonies; and that men pray with the utmost seriousness to that Being whom they conceive the mightiest to save.[2]

Att. Gen. It is stated in this work of the "History of the Corruptions of Christianity" that the notion of the Trinity in Unity was —

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[1] Επικαλούμενον is used in the same sense and manner in 1 Pet. i. 17. "If ye *call* on the Father."

[2] "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Rom. x. 13. Ubi voce Κυρίου Christum intelligi, ex contextu planum est.—Bull. Prim. et Apost. Trad. p. 392.

Court. Stay. You had better ask if another instance can be adduced, in favour of the disciples of Christ believing their Lord to be God, contrary to any other proposition laid down by the writer in this work.

Att. Gen. Can you, sir, produce any other instance to this purpose?

Witness. Yes; and one as strong and certain as any previously advanced. I allude to the story of St. Paul's conversion, in which, as it is twice related by himself, Jesus is deified in the clearest terms. This transaction appears to have been a repetition of the scene of Moses and the bush, heightened in terror and solemnity. Instead of a lambent flame appearing to a solitary shepherd amidst the thickets of the wilderness, the full effulgence of the Shechinah, overpowering the splendour of the mid-day sun, bursts upon the commissioners of the Sanhedrim, on the road to Damascus, within a small distance of the city. Jesus speaks, and is spoken to, as the divinity inhabiting that glorious light. Nothing can exceed the tone of authority on the one side, and the submission and religious dread on the other. The Apostle usually recites this story before making a public defence of his belief in Christ, and it had the effect of heightening the resentment of his incredulous countrymen against him.

Court. Mr. Attorney General, you may now

proceed in the course you were about to take when I interrupted you.

Att. Gen. Very well, my Lord. — Now, sir, you have stated it to be asserted by Priestley that the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity was first suggested by Plato and his disciples; what have you to allege against this position?

Witness. Priestley in his book asserts, that the notion of the Trinity was suggested, and, as he says, "first advanced in the second century, by converts from the Platonic school." Plato taught, that the Supreme Being included three principles in his divine nature, and that these principles formed a Unity[1]; and, because Plato has said

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[1] Gibbon, in the brilliant effusions of his infidelity, says on this subject, "that Plato has marvellously anticipated one of the most surprising discoveries of the Christian Revelation." (Rom. Emp. ch. xxi. p. 321.) The three principles are not the principles of Plato, but of the junior Platonists of the second and third centuries, who differ widely from Plato, though the acknowledged founder of the sect. (See Cudworth's Int. Syst. i. iv. 36.) Gibbon boldly asserts, "that the Apostle has bestowed on the fundamental principle of Plato's theology a divine sanction." (Ch. xxi. p. 320.) "His notion of the theology, both of the evangelist and philosopher," says Dr. Craven, "must, surely, be extravagantly erroneous. They who are the best acquainted with Plato's theology make its fundamental principles to be these two; *God* and *Matter*; both eternal, the one independent of the other. St. John gives no sanction to such a doctrine. The *Logos* of St. John is a person, not a metaphysical abstraction." — See Craven's Jewish and Christian Dispensations, ch. xv.

this, the writer of "The Corruptions of Christianity" conceives that the Christians of the second century borrowed their notions of a Trinity from this notion of Plato; and, as the doctrine was a doctrine of Gentile philosophy, it, therefore, could not be one of Divine Revelation. Now, to say that the discoveries of Revelation and the investigations of philosophy cannot coincide, will be to affirm what cannot be proved; and why is it to be supposed that no one part of the doctrine of an inspired writer could be previously taught by wise men not inspired? Many of the moral precepts of our Lord are to be found in works of more ancient heathen authors [1]; and were every iota of the Gospel doctrine to be found in the writings of the Greek philosophers, this would not be sufficient to set aside the pretensions of the first preachers of Christianity to a divine commission. But the doctrine of three principles in the Divine

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[1] On the forgiveness of injuries, Cicero says, "Quædam officia adversus eos servanda, a quibus injuriam acceperis." Lib. i. ch. 15. Cicero, also, commends Pericles for saying that a magistrate should not only restrain his hands from doing wrong, but turn his eyes from contemplating objects that excite it. "Decet non solum manus, sed etiam oculos abstinentes habere." Off. i. 40.

Juvenal says, Whoever secretly meditates a crime, is guilty of it:—

> Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum
> Facti crimen habet. Sat. xiii. 208.

nature was not peculiar to the Platonic school: the followers of Plato pretended to no more than to be the expositors of a more ancient doctrine; and it may be clearly traced from Plato up to the Egyptian priests. The same notions of a *triple* principle prevailed in the Persian and Chaldæan theology. Vestiges of it are discernible in the Roman superstition in a very late age; and this worship of the Romans was received from their Trojan ancestors, for the Trojans brought it with them into Italy from Phrygia, and in Phrygia it was introduced by Dardanus as early as the ninth century after the flood; so that a notion of the Trinity, more or less removed from the purity of the Christian faith, is found to have been a leading principle in all the ancient schools of philosophy, and in the religions of almost all nations; and traces of an early popular belief of it appear even in the abominable rites of idolatrous worship. If reason was sufficient for this great discovery, what could be the means of information but what the Platonists themselves assign; namely, "a theology delivered from the gods," in other words, a theology derived from Revelation. This is the account which Platonists, who were no Christians, have given of the origin of their master's doctrine. But I ask, from what revelation could they derive their information; they who lived before the Christian, and had no light from the Mosaic? For, what-

ever some of the early fathers may have imagined, there is no evidence that Plato or Pythagoras were at all acquainted with the Mosaic writings, not to insist (as I strenuously do) that the worship of the Trinity is traced to an earlier age than that of Plato or Pythagoras, or even of Moses. Their information could only be drawn from traditions founded upon earlier revelations; from scattered fragments of the ancient patriarchal creed; that creed which was universal before the defection of the first idolaters, which the corruptions of idolatry, gross and enormous as they were, could never totally obliterate. Thus the doctrine of the Trinity is rather confirmed than discredited by the suffrage of the Heathen sages, since the resemblance of the Christian faith and the Pagan philosophy in this article, when fairly interpreted, appears to be nothing less than the consent of the latest and earliest Revelations.[1]

Court. What were the three principles in the Divine Nature, according to the Platonists, named?

Witness. *Goodness*, *Intelligence*, and *Vitality*, by which was meant the eternal activity of the Deity, the existence of intellect, and the vital principle.

Att. Gen. My Lord, I have done with this witness.

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[1] See Dr. Horsley's Charge to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of St. Albans, p. 49.

Cross-examination of the Witness.

Court. Priestley, are there any questions which you wish to ask of this witness?

Priestley. Yes, my Lord. In the commencement of his evidence, the witness attempts to show that Theodotus was the first promulger of the doctrine of the sole humanity of Christ; whereas that person only revived the doctrine long previously held by the ancient Unitarians, which doctrine was the universal opinion of the primitive Church until the time of Victor, who was contemporary with Theodotus; and I challenge the witness to disprove this. [1]

Witness. Then, Eusebius shall decide the point; who tells us, "that the pretensions of these heretics were confuted by the presbyter Caius, who, referring to authors older than the time of Victor, says, "These heretics maintain that all the first Christians, and the Apostles themselves, received and taught those things which the followers of Artemon (the disciple of Theodotus) now hold; and that the true doctrine which was preserved till the time of Victor, the thirteenth bishop of Rome in succession from St. Peter, was first corrupted by his successor Zephyrinus. Their assertion might have some show of probability, but that, in the first place, the Holy Scriptures were

[1] History of Corrup. vol. xi. p. 486.

directly opposed to them; and there are extant many writings of the brethren, more ancient than the times of Victor, which they wrote to the Gentiles in defence of the truth, and against the then existing heresies, — I speak of Justin, Miltiades, Tatian, Clement, and many others; in all of which the divinity of Christ is maintained. And who is ignorant of the books of Irenæus, Melito, and the rest, which proclaim that Christ is both God and man? and whatever psalms and songs were written from the first by the faithful brethren, they all ascribe divinity to Christ, and celebrate him as the Word of God. How, then, can it be pretended that the doctrines which the Artemonites inculcate were received till the time of Victor? And how is it that they are not ashamed to throw out this calumny against him, since they perfectly well know that Victor excommunicated Theodotus, the inventor and father of their *God-denying apostacy*, the first who asserted the mere humanity of Christ." These are the words of Eusebius himself. [1]

Priestley. I see nothing in this passage but a

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[1] Hist. Ecc. lib. v. c. 28.

As soon as Theodotus had impugned the *divinity* of Christ, he was instantly condemned by the Church for it, and was excommunicated by the Bishop of Rome, Victor, (about A. D. 188,) as an *Heresiarch*.— Waterland's Judg. of Prim. Churches.

plain acknowledgement that the ancient Unitarians themselves constantly asserted that their doctrine was the universal opinion of the primitive Church till the time of Victor.[1] The witness has also said, that Ignatius speaks of Jesus as a Divine Being, and as the Son of God, in his epistle to the Magnesians. I will admit that he is made to say so in our present copies of his epistles; but then the witness cannot but know that those epistles are not genuine; and the learned, on this account, have long given them up.

Witness. This I must unequivocally deny: that the longer epistles are spurious, I readily admit; but those of which we are speaking, the shorter ones, I will, in conjunction with Vossius, Hammond, Petavius, Grotius, and a host of others, maintain to be genuine; and in them is the evidence of the truth of Christ's Divine nature, of which I have spoken.[2]

Priestley. Then, in common justice, I require you to prove them genuine.

Witness. No; the *onus probandi* rests with you, to show that the great majority, indeed, I may

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[1] History of Corrup. vol. xi. p. 486.

[2] See Horsley's Letter to Priestley, V. p. 135.

When Priestley made this assertion he was unacquainted with the writings of Bishop Bull, and many others of the great divines, on this point.

say, that nearly all the learned critics and scholars who hold them as genuine, are mistaken.

Priestley. Again, my Lord, the witness attempts to make St. John speak of an incarnation, when he says, "Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."[1]

Court. Well, are not these the very words of our common version?

Priestley. They are, my Lord; but the term "*in the flesh*" would be better if it were "*of the flesh;*" for the clear meaning of the passage is, "Every spirit is of God that confesses Jesus Christ is come *of* the flesh, or is truly man;" and if he considers the original, he must admit this.[2]

Witness. I can never admit this; for how you can venture to change the translation of a word for that which is not the translation of the original, I know not.

Court. Hand me the Greek Testament. — ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα. — Well.—

Witness. The words ἐν σαρκὶ can only be truly rendered "*in* the flesh;" and the difference between the coming of Jesus Christ *in* the flesh, and his coming *of* the flesh, is wonderfully great: the one declares an incarnation, the other a mortal extraction.

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[1] 1 John, iv. 2.

[2] History of Corrup. vol. i. p. 10.

Court. The alteration is inadmissible.

Priestley. Again, the witness denies that the Nazarenes and Ebionites were the same sect under different names, while Origen and Epiphanius both acknowledge that they were one, and maintained the same tenets. Now it is admitted that the Ebionites denied the divinity of Christ, and therefore the Nazarenes denied the same; and they were the Hebrew Christians, or the primitive church of Jerusalem.

Witness. What Epiphanius says is a mere doubt (for he confesses that he knows nothing of the matter), whether the Nazarenes believed in the divinity of Christ[1]; which doubt you have improved into a positive assertion that they rejected it: and with respect to the singular assertion of Origen, that the name of Ebionites was given, without exception, to all the Jewish Christians who united with the acknowledgement of Jesus as the Christ, the strict observance of the Mosaic law, it is worthy of observation that he says, at the same time and in the same passage, that these Ebionites were so named on account of "the *poverty of the law*[2];" whereas, when he is speaking of the Ebionites, properly so called, who professed the opinions of Ebion, and denied our Lord's

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1 Adv. Hæres. lib. i. p. 123. in Nazaræos.

2 Contra Cels. lib. xi.

divinity, he tells us that they were so named on account of "*their poverty in their faith of Jesus.*" [1]

Priestley. The learned tutor of the great Lardner proves from his writings, that the Nazarenes and the Ebionites were the same sect.

Witness. That Jones, to whom you allude, wrote to this effect I acknowledge; but his single opinion is opposed to that of the greatest critics, — to Grotius, Vossius, Spencer, Huetius, and a host of others, together with the illustrious Mosheim himself, who says, "This little body of Christians, which coupled Moses with Christ, split again into two sects, distinguished from each other by their doctrines concerning Christ, and the permanent obligation of the law, and perhaps by some other circumstances;" and he adds, "The Nazarenes had a better and a truer notion of Christ than the Ebionites." [2]

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[1] Πτωχεύοντες περὶ τὴν εἰς Ἰησοῦν πίστιν. In Comment. in Matt. p. 428. See British Critic, vol. ii. p. 273.

[2] Both Nazarenes and Ebionites were Christians of Jewish origin, who lived, for the most part, to the east of Jordan and the Orontes. The Nazarenes retained the name which was originally borne, not by a single sect, but by the followers of Christ in general: the Ebionites derived their name either from the Hebrew word Ebion, which signifies *poor*, or, as some have thought, from a founder of the name of Ebion. Both sects were nearly allied to each other, but on some points they differed. They both agreed in retaining the Levitical Law, at the same time that they professed themselves

Priestley. Still I affirm that there is no trace in history, that the Nazarenes believed Christ to be more than man.

Witness. The silence of history would be no proof on this point, that such was their faith, if indeed history were silent, which I think with Grotius and others it is not. But if it could be proved (which I deny to be possible) that these Nazarenes were the first converts of the Circumcision; we, who maintain the full divinity of Christ, should find in their confession the verdict of those first Christians in our favour.

Priestley. Leaving this point upon which we cannot agree, and going to the dying prayer of Stephen, which you say is addressed to Jesus, I have to observe that the proper object of prayer is God the Father; for "him *only*" are we called upon to serve: how then can you justify supplication to any other, even though he were a Divine Being?

Witness. God forbid that I should ever refuse to acknowledge that the Father is *a* proper object of prayer, and may he equally forbid that I should consider him as *the* proper object of adoration to

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followers of Christ; but they differed from each other in this respect, that the Ebionites considered Christ as a mere man; whereas, the Nazarenes, if not all, at least some of them, are said to have ascribed to him a divine origin. — Marsh's Michaelis, vol. iv. p. 162.

the exclusion of the other persons in the Godhead, in the sense in which you seem to charge me. I do not deny that there is an honour personally due to him as the Father; but there is also an honour personally due to *the* Son, as *the* Son; and to the Spirit, as the Spirit. Our knowledge of these personal distinctions is so obscure, in comparison with our apprehension of the general attributes of the Godhead, that it should seem that the Divinity is rather to be generally worshipped in the three persons jointly and indifferently, than that any distinct honours are to be offered to each separately. Prayer, however, for succour against external persecution, seems addressed with peculiar propriety to the Son.[1]

Priestley. Next, I would ask, did not the Christians of the second century, who embraced the notion of Plato's *Triad* of Divinity, conceive Christ (or the Divine *Logos* as you call him) only to have been an attribute of the Father: and did not this attribute or property of the Divine mind, in process of time, come to be regarded as a separate, personal character? And was not this the change of a mere attribute into a thinking substance? In plain words, is not the *wisdom* of God personified and called the Son of God?

Witness. No such thing; for neither did the early Christians, or any other Christians, mistake, nor

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[1] Dr. Horsley's Letters to Priestley, XII. p. 234.

could they mistake, no person for a person, by fits and starts; nor could they, any more than myself, understand a *person* for a *principle*, a substance for a shadow, or how to create a thing out of nothing. I affirm with others, that the *Logos* of St. John is a person, not a metaphysical abstraction.[1] The Platonists and Plato have very different notions of the divine *Triad*. The Platonists separate the divine hypostasis from its attributes, and make of them so many distinct principles; in Plato they go in union together, and form one wise and powerful Being.

Priestley. You surely cannot deny that the Christian Platonists, when they became Christians, discarded the notion of the eternity of the Logos as a person, and came back to the original belief, that it was an attribute and not a person.[2]

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[1] Gibbon says, "the theology of Plato might have been for ever confounded with the philosophical visions of the Academy, if the name and divine attributes of the Logos had not been confirmed by the celestial pen of the last of the Evangelists." (D. & F. c. xxi. p. 318.) But what room can there be, either for confusion or confirmation, when Logos has different and distinct meanings; and signifies in Plato, wisdom, — a divine attribute indeed, — and in the Evangelist denotes a person. — Dr. Craven's Jewish and Christian Dispensations, p. 247.

[2] Tertullian, to prevent this very conclusion, that the Logos was, at some time or other, a mere attribute, remarks, that nothing empty and unsubstantial can proceed from God; for

Witness. If they did (and I question if more than a few did) look upon the Logos as a principle only of the Divine mind, they were led to adopt this notion from a comparison between the Logos and the reason of the human soul, or between the WORD and human speech.

Priestley. That some did think so, you admit. At all events, the orthodoxy of the second century was mingled with the notions of the Platonic school, and this is a fact which you will hardly deny.

Witness. Nor do I desire. Unitarians conceive they gain a conquest when they can stamp the Catholic faith with the brand of Platonism; for my own part, I deem it no disgrace; on the contrary, I rejoice and glory in the opprobrium, for I am free to confess that I maintain, not a perfect agreement with the Platonists on this point, but such a similitude as speaks a common origin, and affords an argument in confirmation of the Catholic doctrine, from its conformity to the most ancient and universal traditions.[1]

Court. Would you wish to ask any more questions?

Priestley. No, my Lord. I have done.

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the Divine nature admitting neither quality nor accident, every thing belonging to it must be substance. — Horsley's Letter XIII.

[1] See Bull's Prim. et Apost. Trad. de Jesu Christi Divinitate, ch. v.

Court. Who is your next witness?

Att. Gen. Call George Bull.

Court. Against which of the Defendants does this witness appear?

Att. Gen. Against them all, my Lord.

Court. How so?

Att. Gen. Because, my Lord, they each and all assert, and have publicly declared in their writings, that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity was the invention of the third century, and I bring this witness to prove the direct contrary. Moreover, I have before me on the table the "Apology of Theophilus Lindsey on resigning the Vicarage of Catterick," and his "Sequel," the "Calm Inquiry," "The Improved Version of the New Testament," and "The Reply to the Bishop of St. David's," which I shall prove to be the works of the Defendant Belsham.

Belsham. We admit the fact of these being our respective writings.

Att. Gen. And that they each and all deny the Trinity to be the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures?

Belsham. Yes; decidedly so.

Court. Proceed.

Att. Gen. Your name, sir, I believe to be George Bull.

Witness. It is.

Att. Gen. I am informed that you are the author of a book entitled, "Defensio Fidei Nicænæ."

Witness. I am.

Att. Gen. What is the object of that work?

Witness. To prove the Godhead of the Son, and to show both the consubstantiality and the co-eternity of Christ the Son of God, from the consent of the ancient doctors of the Church, who lived before the Council of Nice, with the Nicene Fathers, by a tradition derived from the apostolical age itself.

Att. Gen. What are we to understand by the term consubstantial?

Witness. A participation of the very same nature.

Att. Gen. What do the early Fathers assert, in your opinion, respecting the Divinity of Christ?

Witness. They prove that Jesus Christ, before he had that name or was born of the Virgin Mary, had a real existence in a far more excellent nature than the human, and in that nature appeared to the holy men of old as a foretoken of his future incarnation, and did preside over, and had care of the Church which was to be redeemed by his blood: so that from the beginning of the world, the whole order of divine economy was altogether transacted through him; yea, even before the foundation of the world, he was actually present with God his Father, and through him all the universe was created.

Court. Adduce your proofs.

Witness. Clement of Alexandria, who wrote A. D. 194, speaking of Christ, says, "Who is most manifestly God, who is made equal to the Lord of the Universe; because he was his Son, and exists in God." — The force of which expression lies in this, that every son is of the same nature and essence with his father, and that whatsoever exists in God *himself*, must necessarily be very God.[1] Again, the same Father says, "*He* can want nothing, who has the WORD, *the Almighty God;* nor does he ever lack any of those things which are needful for him: for *the* WORD is a possession that has nothing wanting to it, and which is the foundation of all plenty."[2] — The plain meaning of which is, *The* WORD, as being God Almighty, can want nothing; and thence, can do and give all things to those who are His.

Att. Gen. You stated it as the doctrine and belief of the early Fathers that Christ in his pre-existing state, that is, in the state of his existence before his coming as Messiah, appeared unto the holy men of old: do you mean to say that he is the Jehovah of the Old Testament?

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[1] Defensio Fid. sect. iv. ch. 2.

[2] Defensio Fid. 2. vi. 4.

Est enim minime indigens, qui Verbum habet *Deum omnipotentem*, et nullo eorum, quibus opus habet, unquam eget; Verbum enim possessio est, cui nihil deest, et est causa omnis copiæ. — Pæd. iii. 7.

Witness. Justin Martyr says that it was Christ who appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre (Gen. xviii. 1.), who rained brimstone and fire from heaven upon Sodom (Gen. xix. 24.), who appeared in the form of a man and wrestled with Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 24.), and who appeared in the burning bush to Moses (Exod. iii. 4.). Irenæus, also, affirms the same: and these fathers are followed by Theophilus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, and others.[1]

Att. Gen. If God, or the Lord, be said in the Old Testament to have appeared to holy men in the form of an angel or other divine resemblance, what reason had these ancient Fathers to suppose that it was the Son of God?

Witness. No doubt because they were taught to believe this from the Apostles themselves and their immediate successors; and also for this reason; because, as God created the world by his Son, by the same Son he governs it; and as the Son had previously held converse with mortals before his incarnation, so he carries on the same intercourse with them after it.[2]

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[1] Defen. Fid. sect. i. ch. 1. § 3, 4, 5, and 6.

[2] Deus in terris cum hominibus alius conversari non potuit, quàm Sermo, qui caro erat futurus. — Tertul. adv. Prax. c. 16. See, also, Clem. Alex. Pædag. l. i. c. 11. Orig. cont. Cels. lib. 6.

Att. Gen. And you think the angel who appeared unto Jacob was God, and that God was the Son or The WORD.

Witness. I do: for Jacob or Israel when he blessed his grandsons said, "God, before whom my Fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day: *The Angel* which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads."[1] Here it is evident that *God* and the *Angel* are the same; but no created Angel could either confer blessing, or be the God of Abraham; and therefore it could be none other than He, the Son of God, who is "higher than the Angels," "and came forth from the Father."

Court. And you say that the early Fathers believed and asserted Christ, or the Son, to be consubstantial with God, the Father; do they also say, that he was co-eternal with him and co-equal?

Wit. Clemens Alexandrinus says, "The Son of God never comes down from his watch-tower, as never being divided, never parted asunder, and never passes from place to place, but is always every where and contained no where, all mind, all the Father's light, all eye, sees all things, hears all things, knows all things, and by his power searches all things. To him all the host of angels and gods is in subjection.[2]—Here

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[1] Gen. xlviii. 15, 16.

[2] Strom. l. vii. p. 702.

is a proof of his consubstantiality. In the Book ascribed to Hermas the Shepherd are these words: — "The Son of God is more ancient than any created thing, so that he was present in counsel with his Father at the creation."[1] — He was therefore not created; for had he been so, he would not have been older than all creation, but the oldest created thing: hence is he co-eternal with God. Clemens Alexandrinus further says of Christ, that "he was" the divine LOGOS or WORD, who is indeed true God, equal to the Lord of all; because he is his Son and the WORD which was in God.[2] — Here Christ is said to be the Divine WORD, — very God of very God, — equal to the Father, and that for this reason — because he is the Son of God, and the WORD subsisting in God himself.[3]

Att. Gen. But though the early Fathers have declared the nature of Christ to be Divine, may not that heavenly and divine nature be in some degree different, and not altogether precisely the same with the Father?

Witness. No: I repeat it, that it is the belief of the earliest Christian writers, as well as the doctrine

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[1] L. iii. sect. 9.
See this abundantly proved, Def. Fid. sect. iii. v.
[2] Epist. ad Tit. c. 2.
[3] Def. Fid. 2. vi. 3.

of Scripture, that the Son is consubstantial with the Father; and that he participates equally in the same *nature* with him; that he is not of any created or mutable essence, but of the very self-same divine and incommunicable nature with the Father; and I affirm this to be the constant and unanimous opinion of the Catholic writers of the three first centuries. These Fathers, indeed, did, by way of distinction, call God the Father, the *supreme* and most high God, and even the *one God;* but they also constantly acknowledge the true and undoubted divinity of the Son of God, as I have proved at large, in that section of my Defence of the Nicene Faith, which treats "of the subordination of the Son to the Father as to his origin and source.[1]" Origen and Dionysius of Alexandria both speak decidedly on these points.

Court. We cannot now take their opinions, because all that we are endeavouring to prove relates to the belief of the two first centuries.

Att. Gen. We have proved this from the Christian writers before the Nicene Council; and it is equally necessary to show that the same belief was current, and prevailed from those times to the present.

Court. I admit this may be necessary by and by; but as we are are now speaking exclusively of opinions held by the Fathers before the Nicene

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[1] Def. Fid. sect. iv.

Council, adduce, therefore, some further proofs from the early Fathers.

Witness. Barnabas, who wrote A. D. 72, says that Christ existed before the world, and that he made the world; "for if he had not come in flesh, how could we men have been saved when we looked at him? For when men look at the sun, the work of his hands, which will cease to exist, they have not power to resist its rays."[1] — The work of whose hands? — Christ's. It was, therefore, Christ who made the sun; but it is said in Genesis, that "God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day:" hence, according to Barnabas, God and Christ are the same. Clemens Alexandrinus speaks, also, very clearly upon the same point when he says, — "But the most perfect and most holy, the highest and most commanding, the most royal and beneficent nature, is that of the Son, which is most intimately united with *Him who is alone Almighty.*"[2] I am willing to rest the argument of the Son's divine equality with the Father, upon this passage alone; for this account effectually excludes the idea of Christ being a corporeal, or even an angelic being: it identifies him with the Father in essence, and ascribes to him those attributes which only belong to God.

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[1] Ep. c. v. p. 16.

[2] Strom. l. vii. c. 2.

Att. Gen. Then here will we conclude the evidence of this witness.

Cross-examination of the Witness.

Court. Defendants, what questions will you ask of him?

Priestley. My Lord, in his first quotation of Clemens Alexandrinus, the Witness describes the Father as saying, that Christ was made equal to the Lord of the universe; but this is proving too much, for thus Christ is made *supreme*, whereas supremacy can only belong, and can only properly be ascribed, to God the Father.

Witness. Though Christ be declared equal to the Father, as Lord of the universe, he is subordinate, as being the Son; or, as the Creed which speaks the belief of Athanasius renders it, "He is equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; but inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood."

Lindsey. But when Clement says of Christ, "that he can want nothing who has the Word, *the Almighty God*," surely the scribe has committed an error; for if the Greek of the original were written in the genitive case, — "the Word *of* the Almighty God," the mistake would be rectified.[1]

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[1] This was the proposition of G. Clerke, in his *Antenicenismus*, written against Bishop Bull, to substitute τοῦ παντοκράτορος Θεοῦ for τὸν παντοκράτορα Θέον.

Witness. But we cannot submit to such an emendation where there is no ground for it; for no manuscript countenances it; and were the alteration admitted, the sense and meaning of the passage would be entirely done away. The sense of Clement, as I have already asserted, is this: — "He who has the *Word*, can want nothing; because that *Word* is God Almighty, who can do all things for those who are his, and who, as Almighty God, is the cause of all plenty."

Lindsey. We defy you to prove that any ancient Father or writer called Christ, *God Almighty;* for I cannot regard the passage which you have quoted sufficient.

Belsham. I, also, am of opinion that "*Almighty*" is always applied to the Father only, by the most ancient writers.[1]

Witness. Tertullian, who wrote A.D. 200, speaks decidedly to the contrary. He says, "The names of the Father, — God Almighty, — the Most High, — Lord of Hosts, — King of Israel, — I AM, as far as the Scriptures teach us; — I say, these titles belong to the Son likewise, and that the Son came in these, and always acted according to them, and so manifested them, in himself, to men. 'All that the Father hath,' he saith, 'are mine;' why

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[1] So Dr. Clarke, in his "Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity," and others, have erroneously said.

not, also, his names and titles? Therefore, when thou readest, Almighty God, the Most High, the Lord of Hosts, the King of Israel, and I AM, consider whether the Son be not pointed out by these titles, who is *in his own right* God Almighty, as he is the WORD of God Almighty."—Here the sense of Tertullian is manifest, that Christ, as he is the natural Son of God the Father, and as he is his *Word* (the *Word* existing in him) has all things that God the Father has, and so all the essential attributes of God the Father belong to him, and among the rest the attribute of Almighty.[1]

Lindsey. That the Jehovah of the Old Testament is the same with Jesus of the New seems to be inferred from this and from the other quotation cited by the witness from Tertullian; but we collect from the writings of the ancient Fathers that it was not God the Father who appeared unto the Patriarchs of old, and to other holy men, but some representation of himself, suited to be his messenger, and to be occasionally seen by men.[2]

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[1] Adv. Prax. c. 17.

Omnia Dei Patris attributa essentialia in ipsum competere, atque inter ea attributum Dei omnipotentis. — Bull. Animad. G. Clerke, p. 271.

Omnia, inquit, Patris mea sunt; cur non et nomina?— Tertull. ut supra.

[2] This objection has been frequently started.— See Waterland's Defence.

Witness. That Christ is the Jehovah of the Old Testament I have already shown to be the belief of Justin Martyr; as clearly can I show it to be the belief and assertion of Irenæus, of Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Novatian, and the Antiochan Fathers.[1] That the angel who appeared to the Patriarchs and others was, in the judgment of these Fathers, Christ, is indisputable. God the Father was never seen by any man, nor can be seen even under any *assumed* appearances; for having no principle from whence he springs, he is subject to none; nor can be said to be sent by another. On the contrary, the Son of God, in respect to his being born of the Father, certainly, on that account, receives all his authority from the Father; nor is it any more dishonour to him to be sent by the Father, than to be born of him. He is of the Father; by him the Father made all things that are in the world, and, moreover, in due time made himself known to the world by him.[2]

Lindsey. But a forcible objection has been urged against this position by one who alleges St. Paul, in the beginning of his Epistle to the Hebrews, to declare, "That God, who, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken

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[1] Defen. Fid. sect. i. ch. 1.

[2] Defen. Fid. Brev. Animad. adv. G. Clerke, p. 278.

unto us by his Son." Here, by these last days is to be understood the days of the Evangelists; before that time, therefore, it seems that neither the Son of God had spoken, nor God, through the Son; for if the Son of God, or God through the Son, had so spoken, the Apostle could not have made that distinction between the latter times of the Evangelists, and the ancient period of the Old dispensation.[1]

Witness. I answer, with Justin Martyr, that the *Word*, or Son of God, appeared to the holy men of old as an angel, putting on the form of a created though spiritual intelligence: under the New dispensation he appeared in the form of man, and *assumed* our nature.[2] Now, how does this agree with the Scriptures? God says, in Exodus (xxiii. 20:) — "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared: beware of him, and

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[1] This was the objection of Ludovicus de Tena, in his "Difficulties in the Epistle to the Hebrews." — See Def. Fid. p. 11.

[2] Filium Dei ad humana colloquia descendisse ab Adam usque ad Patriarchas in visione, in somno, in speculo, in ænigmate, &c. — Tertull.

Reverà enim erat Dominus per Mosen Pædagogus veteris populi; per seipsum autem populi novi dux, facie ad faciem. — Clem. Alex. Pæd. l. i. c. 7.

obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him." Now, that this angel was Christ, St. Paul directly asserts, when he says, — "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents."

Belsham. Christ, you say? Christ is the name of a man who did not then exist.

Witness. Here Christ is put for the Son of God who, in the fulness of time, assumed our nature, and was called Christ; by whom "were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him." Moreover, Philo Judæus, speaking of the angel which preceded the people of Israel, agrees with St. Paul in declaring it to be the WORD, or the only begotten Son of the Father, by whom God directs and governs the universe. Hence it appears upon what high and clear authority the ancient Fathers affirmed that Jehovah of the Old Testament, honoured and worshipped, was none other than the Son of God; and that it was he who appeared to Moses in the burning bush on Mount Sinai, and who manifested himself to Abraham; — that Son of God, and that Jehovah who *is* the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, a title applied only

to the true God, and not to any created angel or being.[1]

Belsham. I would ask the witness whether Christ himself does not acknowledge that he was ignorant of the time of the general judgment.— "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."[2] And Irenæus says that God "the Father is declared by our Lord to have the preference in knowledge, and to be above all:"[3] whereas you affirm the Son to be omniscient, and equal to the Father.

Witness. I freely confess that the words of Irenæus, at first sight, seem to ascribe this ignorance to Christ; and I think the holy Father was hurried on by an excessive zeal and earnestness, in opposing the horrible tenets of the Gnostics, to speak incautiously, as it sometimes happens to the best of men: but that Irenæus really believed Christ, as God, to be ignorant of any thing, none can imagine who have read his works; for no one has more clearly asserted the absolute divinity of the Son as equal to the Father than Irenæus. With respect to the words spoken by our Lord, he declares that no dispensation of God, either by man as David, or by an angel, or by the Son of man, had ordained

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[1] Defen. Fid. sect. i. ch. 2. [2] Mark, xiii. 32.
[3] Super omnia esse Patrem. Iræ. l. ii. c. 28.

us to know the times and the seasons, it being no part of the prophetic office, or within the commission of Christ himself, as Messiah, to reveal this secret to them. As the Son of man he was ignorant of many things: as the Son of God, his wisdom was infinite.[1]

Priestley. Have not the Catholic writers, from the earliest to the latest times, unanimously declared God the Father to be greater than the Son, even according to what you esteem as his divinity?

Witness. They have; but they believed and asserted this, not owing to a difference of nature, or from any essential perfection which is in the Father and wanting to the Son; but only by Fatherhood, or his being the Author or Original; inasmuch as the Son is from the Father, not the Father from the Son.

Priestley. With respect to the language of Clement, which the witness renders by saying, "The person of the Son is *most intimately united* to the Almighty, or God the Father;" it should be translated "the person of the Son nearest to the Almighty," which, if it signifies any thing, makes for us; for by how much more intimately the second person is united to the first, so much the more magnificent titles may be assigned to him: but as

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[1] Defen. Fid. sect. ii. ch. 5.

the second person is not the first, however intimately united to him, so, by consequence, neither is Logos, or the WORD, God Almighty, notwithstanding the intimacy or closeness of any union with him.

Witness. I repeat it, that there is no passage in the writings of the Fathers where the expression "Almighty God," the attribute of Jehovah alone, is more unequivocally referred to Jesus Christ,than the one I have before quoted from Clement, namely, "He who hath the *Almighty God*, *the* WORD, is in want of nothing." And though *the* WORD be *Almighty God*, and is nearest and most intimately united to him, yet he is not God the Father; still, as Clement says "he is the perfect WORD, born of the perfect Father, he may be called, and really is, God Almighty."[2] — Farther on, the same Father speaks of Christ as "the almighty and rational WORD."[3] — Again, in allusion to 2 Cor. xi. 2.: "For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ;" instead of using the name of *Christ*, he explains the one husband by "the *Al-*

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[1] This was the objection which Gilbert Clerke made to Bishop Bull.

[2] Clem. Pædag. i. c. 6. p. 92.
See Bull's Animadv. in Tract. Gilb. Clerke, p. 272.

[3] Pædag. i. 9.

mighty God." [1] — Again, he quotes Eph. iv. 11, 12.: "He gave some Apostles," &c. — where "He" evidently means Christ, who is named just before; but it is remarkable that Clement begins the quotation thus: "The Almighty God hath given;" — and, lastly, he speaks of the WORD as "the Almighty Power, and Omnipotent Will." [2] It surely is impossible, either to require more proof on this point, or to expect any more decisive and clear.

Att. Gen. Sir, we will no longer detain you. — Call Charles Leslie.

Court. Who is this Witness? and against which of the Defendants does he appear?

Att. Gen. This Gentleman, my Lord, has done infinite service to the cause of Christianity in his defence of it against Deists, Jews, Papists, and Unitarians; against each of whom he has conducted his arguments, in the judgment of the learned, in a manner to carry conviction to almost every reader, and at the same time with a spirit of such true wisdom and charity, as has gained him the approbation of all. I do not call upon him as evidence so much against any one of the Defendants, as

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[1] Strom. iii. 12.

[2] See Clem. Strom. iv. 21., and v. 1.
Burton's Test. of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, p. 143.

against the system which one and all have embraced: I might, indeed, fairly produce him against two of them in particular, as having revived objections which he had long previously refuted.

Court. Well, proceed.

Att. Gen. You, sir, are the author of "The Socinian Controversy," written in six familiar dialogues: now, let me ask, what is it that you there adduce which you are now ready to support against the religious system of the Defendants?

Witness. In that work I set out, and I still persist in declaring, that the Unitarians have, from first to last, levelled their objections against the great fundamental doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, on the pretence of such doctrine being a novelty suggested by a heathen philosopher, and introduced in the early times of Christianity. Upon this basis of error they have raised an unsound superstructure after their own fancies. History has been misconceived and misapplied, and Scripture has been distorted, to support their opinion; and from conceiving the doctrine to be contrary to their natural reason, they have endeavoured to make Revelation conform to their understanding.[1]

Att. Gen. You mean, then, to assert that the doctrine of the Trinity is both the doctrine of Scripture, and that which was the belief of the

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[1] First Dialogue, p. 223.

primitive Church; and hence, that the doctrine of Christ's sole humanity is a corruption of the primitive faith; and, consequently, that it is a heresy?

Witness. That is precisely my meaning.

Att. Gen. What do the early Fathers say with respect to the divinity of Christ?

Witness. Barnabas, who lived A. D. 72., says, "It was to Christ that God spoke, when, before the foundation of the world, he said, 'Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness."[1] — Justin Martyr, who wrote A. D. 150., declares it heresy to say that these words were spoken to the angels. "The Father there speaks to the Son, to one numerically different from himself, to an intelligent person."[2] Irenæus, who wrote A.D. 185., says, that "God spoke these words to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;" and in this he is directly followed by Tertullian[3], who flourished A. D. 200. And, lastly, Origen, who lived A. D. 240., confirms all this by saying, "None could raise the dead, but he who had heard from the Father, 'Let us make man in our image;' — and none could command the wind and seas, but he by whom they, and all things else, were

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[1] Ep. c. v. p. 60.
[2] Dial. cum Tryph. p. 265.
[3] Jun. adv. Her. l. v. c. 15. Tertul. adv. Pæx. ii. 12.

made."[1] — I can adduce further proofs to the same effect, if the Court requires it.[2]

Att. Gen. What you have said goes to show that Christ existed before the foundation of the world, and that "by him all things were created;" but this does not necessarily prove that he was God.

Witness. But Justin Martyr and Irenæus, and indeed all the Fathers, agree in declaring that David's prophecy applies to Christ, and Christ alone, at his ascension into heaven; where he says, "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. God is king of all the earth. The princes of the people are joined to the God of Abraham. The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble. Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever"[3] — and this proves the Godhead of the Son.

Att. Gen. But, though Christ be God, is he the supreme God, and therefore equal to the Father?

Witness. David, in the ninety-second Psalm, speaking of Christ, says, "Confounded be all they that delight in vain gods (or idols). Worship him, all ye gods!"

Court. This ascribes very high honour and

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[1] In Matt. p. 266. [2] Second Dialogue, p. 265—267.
[3] Second Dialogue, p. 270.

divinity to Christ; but still falls short of the supreme divinity of the Almighty Father.

Att. Gen. It surely does so; for here we have language speaking of a gradation of gods.

Witness. I beg to observe that this is an error; for though God communicates his name to creatures, and calls some of them gods, yet he will not share his worship, nor give his honour to another: of this he is exceedingly jealous: but there is no gradation of gods.

Court. I do not mean to say that the passage you have quoted in the ninety-second Psalm does not prove Christ to be God supreme; but I want you to give it that explanation of which you think it capable, and which you have inferred, but not shown. It is true that in Scripture the title of gods is applied to some; as, when Moses commanded the Israelites not to revile their gods, he meant the judges of the land.[1] Samuel is called god, by the Witch of Endor, as the prophet of the Lord[2]; and the idols of the heathens are called gods, because they were regarded by them as such; among whom, as St. Paul says, there were many in heaven and earth; that is, celestial and terrestrial[3]: but the title, in its high and proper sense, is applied to none of these.

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[1] Exod. xxii. 28.
[2] 1 Sam. xxviii. 13.
[3] 1 Cor. viii. 5.

Witness. When David, in the psalm alluded to, speaks of Christ, and of the honour due unto him, and calls upon celestial beings to adore him, saying, "Worship him, all ye gods!" St. Paul explains this to be addressed to the angels, — "Let all the angels of God worship him."[1] If, then, all the angels of heaven are called upon, by the Holy Spirit speaking through David, to worship Christ, what further proof can be necessary to show that he is one with the Supreme Being; that Lord God whom only we may serve?

Att. Gen. What is your opinion respecting the doctrine of Plato, as the Unitarians have applied it to the Trinity in Unity?

Witness. Neither Plato nor any other heathen philosopher *invented* what is called his system of Three Principles, nor any notions so much as approaching to a Trinity in the Godhead: they learnt what little they knew of it from the early Jews. Plato attained his knowledge from Egypt; and several of the Fathers have remarked the agreement of his doctrine in many respects with the Old Testament: hence it was that Numenius the Pythagorean said of him, "Plato is only another Moses speaking at Athens."[2] Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Eusebius, unite in

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[1] Heb. i. 6.

[2] Τί γάρ ἐστι Πλάτων ἢ Μωσῆς ἀττικίζων.

stating that Plato had obtained a knowledge of the mystery of the Trinity; but having got this notion, he refined upon it, endeavouring to square it to the principles of heathen philosophy, until he and others fell into errors and absurdities, as they had done on other points and doctrines which they had received by tradition. Instead, therefore, of aspersing and rejecting the errors of Plato with disdain, I take them as confirmations of the truth of the original tradition. They, having not in their possession the oracles of divine truth, sought to prove their doctrine by their reason;[1] and we all know what a dull and fallacious light man's finite reason is. With such feeble aid, "in every step of such an enquiry, we are compelled to feel and acknowledge the immeasurable disproportion between the size of the object and the capacity of the human mind. We may strive to abstract the notions of time, of space, and of matter, which so closely adhere to all the perceptions of our experimental knowledge; but as soon as we presume to reason of infinite substance, of spiritual generation; as often as we deduce any positive conclusions from a negative idea, we are involved in darkness, perplexity, and inevitable contradiction."[2]

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[1] First Dialogue, p. 244.

[2] Gibbon's Decline and Fall, ch. xxi. p. 322.

Att. Gen. My Lord, I have done with this evidence.

Court. Stay; do any of the Defendants desire to examine this witness?

Lindsey. Yes, my Lord; on behalf of the system, and in the names of its supporters, I desire to submit this witness to a cross-examination, which I hope the Court will grant me permission to do at some length.[1]

Court. Undoubtedly. Take your time, and ask as many questions as you think necessary for your defence.

Lindsey. I do not hesitate, on the part of the adherents to our belief, to admit that we desire to have the doctrine of the Trinity, if the admission of it be so essential to our salvation as it is represented to be. I say, we desire to have this so far reconciled to our natural reason, as not to involve a contradiction; for if it does, the doctrine can neither be said to come from God, nor can it be required of us as an article of belief.

Witness. I also admit that we ought to receive nothing but what we think we have reason to believe, and undoubtedly, if a doctrine of Revelation

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[1] The questions here put by Lindsey are only imputed to him, although in the main they were the scruples which he entertained in common with his sect.

be found to contradict a known or revealed truth, that doctrine is inadmissible.

Lindsey. Very well. We can and we do make a difference between things incomprehensible, and which exceed our understandings, and those which are direct contradictions. Is it not then a direct contradiction to say, that God should be man, and that three men should make but one man?

Witness. If by man you mean person, it is a contradiction; but it is none to say that there may be several human persons in the same human nature. One human nature includes many human persons. For what is a contradiction? It is where two opposites are alleged in support of the same thing, in the same respect. We may say, that three men, or three thousand men, make but one company; here is no contradiction: to say that *three persons* make but *one person* is a direct contradiction; but to affirm that *three persons* may be in *one nature* is not so.

Lindsey. But every person partaking of this common nature is a distinct man from all other men, and one man cannot be another.

Witness. That one person cannot be another person, I grant: but though we call each person a distinct man, yet that is only with regard to his personality; for one man, though he differs from another in person, does not differ in his nature. Now, though we allow this common way of speak-

ing of mankind, to say one, two, or three *men*, when it is only strictly true of their *persons;* yet it is not allowable to speak in such terms of one, two, or three Gods, when speaking of the persons in the divine nature.

Lindsey. Allowing the divine nature to be infinitely exalted above the human, yet, surely, what is a contradiction in one nature is so in another.

Witness. I beg your pardon. That which is a contradiction in one nature is not necessarily a contradiction in another.

Lindsey. I don't understand you.

Witness. Let me give you an example. Is it not a contradiction to say, that while I am standing before you in this Court, I am in your society in another place? This is a flat contradiction as respects my person; but it is no contradiction as to my soul, which is at one and the same time present in all the most distant parts of my body. Again, is it not a contradiction that yesterday should be to-day; or that to-day should be to-morrow? That would imply that the same thing should be past and not past, present and not present, at hand and yet not come. But with God all things are present, there is nothing past or to come in eternity.[1] Hence, what is a contradiction

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[1] God's infinite duration being accompanied with infinite knowledge and infinite power, he sees all things past and to

to body, is not so to soul; what is a contradiction to time, is none to eternity; and what is a contradiction with men, is not so with God. This arises from the difference in the nature of things; so that a contradiction in one nature, does not infer a contradiction in another.[1]

Lindsey. Certainly there are many things in the divine nature which infinitely exceed our understandings to comprehend; on which account we ought not to apply to God those terms which are only proper to ourselves: as, for instance, the word *person*, and to say that there are three persons in the Godhead; because this language raises the contradiction of which we complain, and we do not understand how three persons can be in one nature.

Witness. But we must use terms suited to our faculties of conception: we do not make three persons into one *person*, but in one *nature*. If there were words which could express the nature of God properly, or as he is known to the angels of heaven, they would be as unintelligible to us as the word *seeing* is to one born blind. The Apostle

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come; and they are no more distant from his knowledge, no further removed from his sight, than the present: they all lie under the same view. — Locke on the Human Understanding, vol. i. ch. 15. § 12.

[1] First Dialogue, p. 224.

said, when he was "caught up into Paradise he heard unspeakable words which it was not possible for a man to utter." [1]

Lindsey. I readily grant that we are obliged to speak of God in terms and words not strictly and properly adapted to him, but borrowed from those by which we speak of ourselves. When we call God our Father, we mean that we have our being from him, though in a different manner from that in which children are descended from human fathers.

Witness. It is precisely thus that we understand the term *Person;* as, when Christ is called "the express image of *God's person*," we mean something of a totally different kind from the person of a human being; but we use it as we do the word *Father*, because we have no other by which we can express it. Indeed, I do not see how you can object to either word, *Father* or *Person*, for they are both Scripture terms, and both used, though incorrectly, in condescension to our weak capacities.

Lindsey. Still, let me ask, is it not a contradiction to say that the Son is as old as the Father, as you do of the persons in the Trinity, when you say that they are co-eternal; for must not cause necessarily precede effect?

Witness. This is again measuring one nature by

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[1] 2 Cor. xii. 4.

another, when we can only speak of one in the finite terms of the other: because it is a contradiction between Father and Son among men, it does not follow that it is so with respect to God. The contradictions you allege are all made as parallels between God and the bodily persons of men on earth: if you cannot make such parallels between the soul and the body, which you allow yourself unable to draw, how can you expect to do so between the divine and human natures?[1]

Court. Perhaps, Mr. Leslie, it might assist the Jury and myself in better apprehending your opinions of this high mystery of the Trinity, if you could adapt to our comprehensions some illustration, and illustration only, from something with which we are already acquainted, as an outline or a shadow of the doctrine.

Witness. This it will be easy for me to do, by taking the one which I have inserted in my work; I mean, that respecting the human soul.

Court. What is it?

Witness. The soul of man, though in itself one indivisible substance, consists of three principal faculties, the *understanding*, the *memory*, and the *will*. Of these, though all coeval in time, and equally essential to a rational soul, the *under-*

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[1] First Dialogue, p. 228.

standing is, in the order of nature, obviously the first, and the *memory* the second; for things must be perceived before they can be remembered, and they must be remembered and compared together before they can excite *volitions*, from being, some agreeable, others disagreeable. The *memory* must, therefore, be said to spring from the *understanding;* and the *will* to proceed from both; and as these *three* faculties constitute *one* soul, so may it be conceived, how may *three* divine *persons*, partaking of the self-same *nature*, constitute *one* God.

Lindsey. How come you to make but three faculties in the soul? You may make three hundred, if you will. Why do you not make every passion a faculty? And so of the attributes of God: you may make them all *persons;* one of wisdom, another of justice, a third of mercy, a fourth of power, and so on.

Witness. The faculties are the powers of the soul itself, and are of perpetual necessity to its constitution; so that without them the soul would no longer be a soul. Not so of the passions: they go and come; for a man is not always in joy, grief, fear, or anger; but he always has an understanding, a memory and a will; and it is from the action of these that the passions arise. The faculties are the constitution, while the passions are the complexion, of the soul: the complexion often changes, and when the constitution is broken, it is death;

but the complexion arises from the constitution, not the constitution from the complexion. Now, though the passions are many and various, yet there are but three faculties, and they can neither be more nor less. The difference between these is like that of colour and dimensions in the same body. The colours may be many and various; but the dimensions are three, and three only; that is, *length*, *breadth*, and *thickness:* these are the properties constituting the nature of extension; and these three together make but one extension, and they are each to be distinguished, though they are inseparable, from each other. Length is not breadth, and neither of them are thickness; yet no one of these can be without the other two. They are distinctly *three*, yet entirely *one;* they all make up but one and the self-same extension. The colours, indeed, change with every variation of the light, but the dimensions are still the same, and still necessary to the body. This body does not alter its nature by the change of colour, but it would cease to be a body could it want any three of its dimensions; for then it would no longer have an extension, and would no more be a body.[1]

Lindsey. This is new, and very ingenious; and, like all novelties, catching.

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[1] First Dialogue.

Witness. Not so new nor so original as you may at first imagine: the idea is suggested to me by our blessed Saviour's parable of the Sower, where the three ways of sowing the seed which became unfruitful are arranged according to the three faculties of the soul. The first way refers to those who understood not; the second, to those who retain or remember not; and the third, to those whose wills or affections were corrupted by the cares and pleasures of life.

Lindsey. But this illustration does not come up to a complete parallel with the Trinity in Unity, in all points.

Witness. No; the allusion between body and soul, between colour and dimensions in the body, between the faculties and passions of the soul, will not answer in every particular, from the vast difference subsisting between the nature of the body and the nature of the soul, and the different manner of their operations. Still they serve sufficiently, as his Lordship remarks, for mere illustration. But if it be so difficult to conceive matters relating to our souls, if, indeed, we cannot enter into the mysterious nature of them with our limited powers of understanding; how can we pretend to define, explain, or argue upon the infinitely higher subject of the Divine nature? The very imperfect knowledge we have of the nature of God is derived from what we see in the works of his creation;

yet in none of these do we find any resemblance to that eternity, that self-existence, that omnipresence which we know of him from the Scriptures. Shall we then deny these as contradictions when applied to us? No; we believe them to be in the nature of God, though contrary to our nature, because they are revealed. Adopt the same method with respect to other Scripture truths which are above our comprehension and reason, and we immediately arrive at the assent to the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity.

Lindsey. How can there be this diversity of three persons in the Godhead without destroying the unity? This makes God to be compounded of three persons, whereas his nature is simple and entire.

Witness. The Unity of God is not compounded; it is the most perfect of all unities. With respect to our bodies we know they are compounded and made up of other bodies. My finger is a part of my body, and there are several parts in my finger, and these parts may be parted again and divided *ad infinitum;* so that every body is a compound of many bodies. But this is not true of spirits; a spirit is not compounded or made up of parts, and therefore cannot be divided, and is incapable of addition or multiplication. You cannot say of the soul that it is either multiplied or divided among its three faculties, or that it is compounded

of them; these faculties cannot be taken from the soul as a part may be taken from the body: its unity, therefore, is more perfect than the soul; for the faculties are not the parts, but the powers, of the soul, by which it acts, and without which it would be no longer a soul. Now, these powers of the soul bear a near resemblance to the persons of the Godhead, which are not parts of God, for he is an uncompounded, and simple, and single Being. The whole Deity perpetually flowing, in its full infinity from one person to another, is in the eternal enjoyment of its own beatitude, blessed for ever in itself. This perfect Unity cannot but be very faintly represented even in the unity of the soul.[1]

Lindsey. But do you mean to affirm that there is not a mutual communication of spirits? Does not one spirit join with another, and partake of it, as bodies do?

Witness. Undoubtedly, there is an infinitely more intimate communion of spirits than there can be in bodies. All enjoyment and satisfaction in the union of bodies is from the union of their souls. This is what we call love: without this, our bodies are insensible to their unions, and are only as trees, plants, and flowers. St. Paul says, man and wife "become one flesh; but he that is joined

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[1] First Dialogue, p. 239.

unto the Lord is one spirit."[1] Such a union as this is the foundation of those mystical allusions in the Scriptures which apply to Christ the name of a Bridegroom, and represent the Church as his Spouse, and Heaven as the eternal Marriage Feast. And Christ having assumed our nature, that is, taken it into the Deity in his own person, the communications which may thence be given to our glorified bodies from our participating in the same human nature with Christ is "what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can enter into the heart of man to conceive." Our Lord himself, when on earth, prayed to his Father in behalf of his disciples, "that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they, also, may be one in us:"— "And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."[2]

Lindsey. My Lord, I have nothing more to ask of this witness.

Att. Gen. Sir, we will not trouble you further.

Court. Stop: I have a question to ask him. What do you say of the doctrine of Plato?

Witness. Plato, my Lord, and his followers held

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[1] 1 Cor. vi. 16.

[2] John xvii. 21, 22. First Dialogue, p. 240.

the doctrine of three Supreme and Almighty Principles, which they called *persons* (in Greek *hypostases*), and that these act in conjunction, and created the world and all things in it.

Court. How and when did the heathen philosophers embrace this notion of these Three Principles?

Witness. They derived it from immemorial tradition: how, it is impossible to say; but we can show that it was no *invention* of the Christians. Plato, who speaks so much and so ambiguously of it, was born about 428 years before Christ, but he was not the author of what is called his *Triad* of the Deity; nor did the heathen philosophers ascribe it to him: they said that Orpheus treated of it long before Plato, and the Chaldæans long previously to Orpheus. They looked upon it as having come down to them by old and long tradition, from what source they knew not. Plotinus, speaking of these three chief *persons*, which sometimes they call *principles*, says, "that they were not new, nor then invented, but a tradition of old time.[1]" They called these three sometimes "Three Principles," at other times, "Three Gods;" sometimes, "Three Natures," at other times, "Three Persons." Nor is it to be wondered at that they

[1] Μὴ καινοῦς, μὴ δὲ νῦν, ἀλλὰ πάλαι μὲν εἰρήσθαι.

fell into these varieties of expression, when we consider that they were without that Revelation which has more clearly declared these things to us; and, consequently, they were not tied down to that strictness and correctness of expression, which binds us when speaking of this divine mystery. Still, they explained themselves sufficiently to show, that by these Three, they meant only one God. They called, therefore, this Trinity of gods, the τὸ Θεῖον, the Godhead, or the nature of God: for what says their ancient oracle? — "*In all the world there shines a Trinity, of which an Unity is the head.*"[1]

Court. Who is your next witness?

Att. Gen. Call Edward Burton.

Court. Who is Mr. Burton?

Att. Gen. Mr. Burton, my Lord, is the erudite author of a very valuable work, held in the highest esteem by the great Theologians of our day,

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[1] Παντὶ γὰρ ἐν κόσμῳ λάμπει τριὰς, ἧς μονὰς ἄρχει. — Oracula Zoroastri in Platonicis collecta, p. 8.

Leslie's First Dialogue, p. 245.

Plotinus, the pupil of Plato and the preceptor of Porphyry, speaking of the Λόγος, says, his very nature is God, Θεὸς, αὕτη ἡ φύσις, and to show that he meant not the first person of the Godhead, he calls him δεύτερος Θεὸς, a second God. — Ennead. v. 5. c. 3.

entitled, "Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the Divinity of Christ."

Court. Very well, proceed.

Att. Gen. What do you understand to be the doctrine which the Defendants have upheld in their writings, as respects the divinity of Christ?

Witness. These modern Unitarians profess their belief in the simple humanity of Christ; by which they mean, that Jesus had only one nature, and that was the human; that he was in every sense of the term born in the ordinary way; that he had no pre-existence; that he was in no sense of the term God, except as it was applied to Moses and Elijah, when invested with a divine commission.

Att. Gen. You say these are the doctrines of the Defendants, whom you call the *modern* Unitarians: who were the *ancient* Unitarians?

Witness. The ancient Unitarians sprung up in the fourth century; but various sects have been thrown off by these in the process of time. The first Socinians have many and various shades of difference from the Unitarians of the present day. Some have approached nearer to the Arian notions; some have allowed that religious worship may be paid to Christ; some have believed that since his ascension, he has existed in a much more exalted state. Many other variations might be pointed out: but, without examining them separately, I assert, upon the authority of the Ante-Nicene

Fathers, that the doctrine which they held is wholly irreconcileable to any modification of the Unitarian Creed.[1]

Att. Gen. The Defendants have denied in their writings, that Christ was born of a Virgin, and reject all ideas of his miraculous conception; they do this on the testimony of the ancient Fathers of the Church: now, as your work treats, by its title, of these writings, do these Fathers, in your opinion, support this notion?

Witness. Decidedly the reverse. There is not one of the Ante-Nicene writers, from Barnabas to Lactantius, who does not mention that Christ was born of a Virgin; and this single circumstance, which I can support by their evidence, destroys at once the notion of Christ being born in an ordinary way. There is not one of them who does not speak of Christ *being made man*, or of his *coming in the flesh*. The expressions, "God becoming man," "God being incarnate,"[2] are very common in their writings. Now, had these Fathers been Unitarians, had they believed Jesus Christ to have been a mere man, I would ask, could they or would they have spoken of him in this way?[3]

Att. Gen. What is your opinion respecting the Nazarenes and Ebionites?

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[1] Burton, p. 440.

[2] Θεὸς ἐνανθρωπήσας, Θεὸς ἐνσαρκωφείς.

[3] p. 440.

Witness. That they were distinct sects. The Ebionites are said, by the Defendant Priestley, not to have been heretics; and that, as the ancient Fathers did not mention them as heretics, the belief, therefore, of these Fathers, which was that of Unitarianism, was not heretical.[1] Now Origen informs us that there were two sects of Ebionites, and that one of them did believe the miraculous conception of Christ[2]: and Irenæus, whose authority is most valuable, and whose expressions are particularly concise, tells us, that "they used only the Gospel of St. Matthew."[3] It was no wonder, then, that the Ebionites disbelieved the divinity or pre-existence of Christ, if either of these doctrines had been taught them by the Apostles. But, my Lord, though these Ebionites rejected the Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John, this was by no means all they disclaimed. Those "*primitive* Unitarians," as the Defendants call them; those good Christians, who are said "not to have been looked upon as heretical by the early Church;" these men took the liberty (so we are informed by Irenæus, Origen, and Eusebius);—I say, they took the liberty of getting rid of all St. Paul's Epistles at once, calling that Apostle an apostate from the

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[1] Early Opinions, vol. iii. p. 201.
[2] Cont. Celsum, v. 61. p. 625.
[3] I. 26. 2. p. 105. and iii. 11. 7. p. 189.

Law.[1] After seeing this, who can doubt whether the Ebionites were heretical?

Att. Gen. My Lord, as the witness is so familiar with the ancient Fathers as to have them, I may say, *ad unguem*, I propose, with the permission of the Court, to call upon him to produce passages from those Fathers, which bear upon the doctrines and positions of the Defendants indiscriminately.

Court. Do so, if you please.

Att. Gen. Then be so good as to state to the Court, sir, what early Father of the church calls Christ *Almighty.*

Witness. The passage affording the most unequivocal proof of this, you will find in Clemens Alexandrinus, — "He who hath the *Almighty God, the Word*, is in want of nothing;" — and here I would observe: —

Court. Stop. — That has been already adduced by the witness Horsley.

Witness. Still, my Lord, I would bear my testimony to this being applied to Christ: for the same reason I repeat the observation, that the same Father, in allusion to the words of St. Paul, has said, "For I have espoused you to one hus-

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[1] Iren. I. 26. 2. p.105. Orig. cont. Cels. v.65. p.628. Eus. H. E. iii. 27. p. 121. See Burton, p. 443.

band, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ;" where, for the name of Christ, is substituted "the *Almighty* God."[1] — Tertullian also says, "The titles of the Father, God *Almighty*, Most High, Lord of Hosts, King of Israel, I AM, as far as the Scriptures teach us, we say that those titles belong to the Son, and that the Son came under those titles, and always acted according to them." — "He was God Almighty by his own right, inasmuch as he is *the Word* of God *Almighty*."[2]

Att. Gen. Now, sir, as to the Son being consubstantial with the Father.

Witness. Origen makes a resemblance of Christ's proceeding from the Father to the vapour which proceeds from a corporeal substance, and the wisdom of Christ rising from him like a corporeal efflux, — "both which likenesses," he says, "most plainly show, that there is a *communion of substance* between the Son and the Father; for an efflux seems to be of one substance with that body, from which it is an efflux or vapour."[3] And

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[1] Τοῦ παντοκράτορος Θεοῦ. — Strom. iii. 12.

[2] Adv. Prax. c. xvii. p. 510.

[3] Aporrhœa enim ὁμοούσιος videtur, id est, unius substantiæ cum illo corpore ex quo est vel aporrhœa vel vapor. — Ep. ad Heb. vol. iv. p. 697.

The two expressions, "vapour of the power of God," and "efflux of the glory of the Almighty," are taken from the apocryphal Book of Wisdom, vii. 25. — p. 320.

Dionysius of Alexandria, says, "I have proved that the accusation which they bring against me is false, of saying that Christ was not of *one substance with God.*" — And again, "Christ was by nature Lord, and the Word of the Father, by whom the Father made all things, and is declared by the holy writers to be of *one substance with the Father.*" [1] — In both passages the word ὁμοούσιος, *of one substance*, is used; which expression caused such violent disputes at and after the Council of Nice: and this term, Dionysius says, was used by the earlier writers, and he is accused of not having adopted it, which we see he denies; and yet, from the Council of Nice to the present day, there are those who assert that the word was invented and first used at that Council; whereas, by looking at the creed drawn up by the Council of Antioch, A. D. 269, the same word occurs more than once.[2]

Att. Gen. Now, sir, as to Christ's *eternity.*

Witness. I can show this to satiety. Ignatius says of Christ, "Wait for him who is beyond all time, *eternal*, invisible, who for our sakes became

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[1] Τὸν Χριστὸν ὁμοούσιον εἶναι τῷ Θεῷ. — Καὶ ὁμοούσιον τῷ Πατρὶ εἰρημένον ὑπὸ τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων. — Ex Elench. et Apol. p. 90. et contr. Paul Samos. p. 214.

[2] In the creed of the Antiochan Fathers the word ὁμοούσιος occurs twelve times in twice that number of lines. — Vide Concil. Eph. part. iii. c. 6. p. 979. And Bull's Defen. Fid. sect. 2.

visible." [1] Justin Martyr in his comment upon the seventy-second Psalm, which we know to be prophetical of the reign of Messiah, denies that it was spoken of Solomon, as the Jews conceived, but that it expressly spoke "in honour of the *Eternal* King, that is, *Christ;* for Christ is declared to be a King, and a Priest, and God, and Lord, and Angel, and Man, and Chief Captain, and a Stone, and a Child born; first made capable of suffering, then *returning into Heaven* (εἶτα εἰς οὐρανὸν ἀνερχόμενος), and again coming thither with glory, and in possession of the eternal kingdom, as I prove from all the Scriptures." [2] — Justin in his epistle, says of Christ, also, "He who was from the beginning, who *existeth for ever*, in these latter days accounted a Son." [3] — Irenæus is still more express; "The Son, who always *co-existed* with the Father, in times past, and from the beginning, always reveals the Father both to Angels and Archangels, and to principalities and powers, and to all to whom he wishes to reveal." [4] — Origen, in the same manner, says, "The Word, who in the beginning was God

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[1] Ep. ad Polycarp. c. 3. p. 40. Τὸν ἄχρονον, τὸν ἀόρατον, τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς ὁρατὸν, &c.

[2] Justin. Dial. cum Tryph. c. xxxiv. p. 130.

[3] Ep. ad Diognet. c. xi. p. 240.

[4] Iren. l. ii. c. 30. Semper autem *co-existens* Filius Patri olim et ab initio semper revelat Patrem et angelis, &c.

with God, does not admit of higher exaltation;" for "He that is joined to the Lord in one spirit, thought it not robbery to be *equal* with God."[1] — Tertullian says, "Christ our Lord has called himself Truth, not Custom: if Christ has been *always, and is before all things*, Truth is equally *eternal*, and ancient.[2]" — Hippolytus, who wrote A. D. 220, asks, "Why was the temple destroyed, &c.? — was it for the blood of the Prophets? By no means, but it was because they killed the Son of their benefactor; for it is he, who is *co-eternal* with the Father."[3] — Dionysius, taking up that favourite illustration of the light emanating from fire, and casting his eye, perhaps, on the expression used by St. Paul, that Christ "is the brightness or effulgence of his Father's glory," says, "Being the effulgence of *eternal* light, it follows also that he is himself also *eternal*." — Further on he says again, "The Father, therefore, being eternal, the Son is *eternal*, being light of light."[4]

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[1] Ὁ γὰρ Λόγος ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν Θεὸς οὐκ ἐπιδέχεται τὸ ὑπερυψωθῆναι. — Comment. in Joan. xxxii. § 17.

[2] Dominus noster Christus Veritatem se non Consuetudinem cognominavit. Si semper Christus, et prior omnibus, æque Veritas sempiterna et antiqua res.—Tertull. de Virg. velandis, p. 172.

[3] Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ τῷ Πατρὶ συναΐδιος. — Demonstr. contr. Jud. c. vii. vol. ii. p. 4.

[4] Ἀπαυγάσμα δὲ ὢν φωτὸς ἀϊδίου πάντως καὶ αὐτὸς ἀϊδιός ἐστιν. — Ex Elench. et Apol. pp. 87, 88.

Court. These are sufficient.

Att. Gen. Next, sir, we will proceed to the *omnipresence* of Christ: what have you to adduce on this point?

Witness. Clement has observed, in a manner and in expression decisive on this subject ——

Court. Stay, that passage from Clement of Alexandria has already been cited by the Defendant Bull; therefore, without quoting it again, say whether you adduce that as one testimony to the omnipresence attributed to the Son or to Christ.

Witness. It is of all others, my Lord, the strongest proof of this divine attribute. What terms or language can be more express than that the Son of God "is not divided, nor separated, nor changing from place to place; but *every where*, at all times, and circumscribed no where?" [1] Without therefore dwelling upon this passage, which I could wish to do for some time, I pass on to Hippolytus, who, speaking of Jesus coming to be baptized of John in the Jordan, thus expresses himself: — "He that is *present every where*, and faileth no where, who is incomprehensible to angels and invisible to man, comes to be baptized, as it pleased him." [2] And

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[1] Strom. vii. c. 2. p. 831.

[2] Ἡ ἀκατάληπτος πηγὴ, ἡ ζωὴν βλαστάνουσα πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις

Dionysius of Alexandria directly affirms that "The Father and the Son are *every where*." [1]

Att. Gen. That is sufficient proof as to the omnipresence of Christ: now, sir, do any of the Fathers say that he was a being superior to the angels?

Witness. St. Paul, speaking of Christ, says, "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they: for unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son? Let all the angels of God worship him?" But Clement, with his eye on this passage of the Apostle, says, "Who, being the brightness of his majesty, is so much higher than the angels." [2] And Tertullian has also a very remarkable and a very beautiful passage illustrative of this point: — "You have read," he says, "and believed, that angels have been changed into a human form, and borne such a reality of body, that Abraham washed their feet, and Lot was rescued from the men of Sodom by their hands — what was possible for angels, who are inferior to God, that they might be changed into a human body and yet continue angels, will you deny to the greater power

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καὶ τέλος μὴ ἔχουσα, ὑπὸ πενιχρῶν καὶ προσκαίρων ὑδάτων ἐκαλύπτετο. — Hom. in Theo. i. p. 261.

[1] Ὁ Πατὴρ καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς πανταχοῦ.— De Promiss. c. 6. p. 81.

[2] Ep. c. 36. p. 168.

of God, as if Christ were not able really to put on man, and yet continue God?"[1] — And Origen in his commentary upon the 1st chapter of Jeremiah, says, "If you ascend to the Saviour, and see him *the Word* who was in the beginning with God, you will see that he cannot there speak (as a man); and if you compare the tongues of angels with the tongues of men, and know that he is *greater than the angels*, as the Apostle Paul bore witness, you will say that he was too great even for the tongues of angels, since *The Word was God* with the Father."[2] I can multiply these proofs, if more be required.

Court. These are sufficient at present.

Alt. Gen. Now, sir, will you proceed to show which of the Fathers speak of the pre-existence of Christ in union with God the Father.

Witness. First of all, most briefly and clearly does Ignatius say of Christ, "That he was with

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[1] Angelos Creatoris conversos in effigiem humanam aliquando legisti et credidisti, et tantam corporis gestâsse veritatem, ut et pedes eis laverit Abraham, et manibus ipsorum ereptus sit Sodomitis Loth. — Quod ergo angelis inferioribus Deo licuit, uti conversi in corpulentiam humanam angeli nihilominus permanerent, hoc tu potentiori Deo auferes, quasi non valuerit Christus vere hominem indutus Deus perseverere? — Tertul. de Carne Christi, c. 3. p. 309.

[2] Καὶ εἶδῃς ὅτι οὗτος μείζων ἐστὶ καὶ ἀγγέλων.—In Jer. Hom. I. vol. iii. p. 128.

the Father *before the worlds*, and appeared at the end."[1] — And again, "Our God Jesus Christ is rather seen by his existence *in* the Father."[2] — But still more express is Dionysius of Alexandria, for he says, "By *Christ being in the form of God*, is meant, that the Father is in His Son Christ the Word, and Christ *in* the Father."[3] — And even more decidedly still when he adds, "When Christ, the Word, became flesh, the Father did not cease from being contained in him who became flesh because Christ became a body. *The Word became flesh;* and the Apostle shows that Christ is not altered by becoming flesh, being always co-eternal with him that begat him: *in him dwelleth the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily.* Observe how St. Paul reveals the mystery; for he says, that the Father and the Spirit dwell bodily in Christ."[4] — Clement of Alexandria, considering that passage of Isaiah where Christ, the child that was

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[1] Ὃς πρὸ αἰώνων παρὰ Πατρὶ ἦν. Ep. ad Mag. vi. p. 19.

[2] Ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐν Πατρὶ ὢν μᾶλλον φαίνεται. — Ep. ad Rom. c. 3. p. 26.

[3] Πῶς ὁ Πατὴρ ἐν τῷ Υἱῷ αὐτοῦ Χριστῷ Λόγῳ, καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ, ὁ ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων. — Adv. Paul. Samos. Quæst. vii. p. 254.

[4] Ἀκούετε, πῶς λέγει τὸ μυστήριον ὁ ἱερὸς ἀπόστολος Παῦλος, τὸ γὰρ σωματικῶς κατοικεῖν τὸν Πατέρα, καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ. Ibid. p. 259.

born, is said to be "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father," breaks out into this exclamation, "O the Mighty God! O the perfect Child! the Son *in* the Father and the Father in the Son!" [1] — Hippolytus, reviewing another passage of the same prophet, "*Surely God is in thee, and there is none else;*" observes, "By the words *God is in thee*, he showed the mystery of the incarnation, that by the WORD becoming flesh and being made man, the Father was in the Son, and the Son *in* the Father, it being the Son who lived among men." [2] — Does the Court require more instances in proof of this point?

Att. Gen. No, sir — Now, proceed, if you please, to show that Christ was not a created Being.

Witness. That may be very easily and fully done, by running through most of the early Fathers in succession. First of all the shepherd Hermas says, "The Son of God is more ancient than any created thing?" [3]

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[1] Ὦ τοῦ μεγάλου Θεοῦ· Ὦ τοῦ τελείου παιδίου· Ὁ Υἱος ἐν Πατρὶ, καὶ Πατὴρ ἐν Υἱῷ. — Pædag. l. i. c. 6. p. 112.

[2] Τὸ δὲ εἰπεῖν, ὅτι ἐν σοὶ ὁ Θεός ἐστιν, ἐδείκνυεν μυστήριον οἰκονομίας, ὅτι σεσαρκωμένον τοῦ Λόγου καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντος ὁ Πατὴρ ἦν ἐν τῷ Υἱῷ, καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ ἐμπολιτευομένου τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐν ἀνθρώποις. — Contr. Noëtum, c. iv. vol. ii. p. 8.

[3] Filius quidem Dei omni creatura antiquior est. Lib. iii. simil. 9. § 12.

Court. Do you infer from hence, as the witness Horsley has done, that the expression, " being still more ancient than the oldest created thing," establishes the pre-existence and uncreated nature of Christ?

Witness. My Lord, I do; for in the same manner St. Paul calls Christ not the *first* of every creature, but the *first-born* or *first-begotten* of every creature. Justin Martyr and Origen speak the same express and correct language, " He was begotten of the Father, and was with the Father before any thing was created;" says the former. " The image of the invisible God, begotten before every creature, is incapable of death," says the latter. [1] — Irenæus, addressing his fellow-man, says, " Thou art not uncreated, O man! nor didst thou always exist together with God, like his own WORD." [2] — Here are most important disclosures made in these few words, declarative of the uncreated, pre-existing, and divine nature of the *Word* or Christ. And the same Father, commenting upon St. John, adds, " That angels or archangels, or thrones or dominations, were appointed by Him, who is God over all, and made by

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[1] Dial. cum Tryph. 100. p. 195. Comment in Joan. vol. iv. p. 392.

[2] Non enim infectus es, ô homo! neque semper co-exsistebas Deo, sicut proprium ejus Verbum. — L. ii. c. 25.

his WORD, John has thus told us; for, after he had said of the WORD of God, that he was in the Father, he added, 'All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made.'"[1]—Hippolytus declares that Christ "is neither *created*, nor circumscribed by creation."[2] — Origen asserts the same repeatedly.

Court. How is that? for Dr. Clarke in his Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, as I remember, says, "that Origen expressly reckoned the Son among the created things? (δημιουργήματα.)

Witness. Then, my Lord, Origen shall speak for himself; for this Father, writing against Celsus, thus expresses himself: — "Our Saviour and Lord, the *Word* of God, says, *No one knoweth the Son but the Father;* for no one can know him who is *uncreated* and begotten before every created nature in its full extent, so well as the Father who begat him; nor can any one know the Father so well as the animate WORD, who is His Wisdom and Truth."[3] — And, that we may be the better assured of Origen's belief and doctrine, it may be remarked that, in his commentary upon St. John, he again

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[1] Quoniam enim sive angeli, sive archangeli, &c. — Lib. iii. c. 8. § 2.

[2] Οὐ γὰρ πέφυκε περιγράφεσθαι γεννητῇ φύσει τὸ κατὰ φύσιν ἀγέννητον. — Contr. Ber. et Hel. i. p. 227.

[3] L. vi. § 17. vol. i. p. 643.

says, "God, who is above all created things, became man." [1]

Att. Gen. Now, sir, that you have shown what the belief and writings of the early Fathers testify of Christ as uncreated, what do they prove with respect to his office as Creator?

Witness. Justin Martyr, in explaining some things to Diognetus which had raised doubts and difficulties in the way of his apprehension of Christianity, addressed a letter to him, in which he says, "The omnipotent and all-creative and invisible God hath himself from heaven established among men the truth, and the holy and incomprehensible word, and rooted it in their hearts: not as you might suppose, by sending to men any of his servants, either an angel, or a prince, or one of those who administer the affairs of earth, or one of those who have the management of heavenly things intrusted to them; but the *Framer and Creator* of the universe himself, by whom he created the heavens, by whom he shut up the sea in its own bounds." [2] I have already shown that Irenæus illustrates and enforces the passage of St. John by

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[1] Θεὸς ὁ ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ γενητὰ ἐνηνθρώπησεν. — In Joan. vol. iv. p. 87.

[2] Ἀλλ' αὐτὸν τὸν τεχνίτην καὶ δεμιουργὸν τῶν ὅλων, ᾧ τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἔκτισεν, ᾧ τὴν θαλασσαν ἰδίοις ὅροις ἐνέκλεισεν. — Ep. ad Diognetum, c. 7. p. 237.

saying that "The WORD of God, *by whom all things were made*, is our Lord Jesus Christ." [1] — I shall give one other quotation to confirm what I have said, by citing Hippolytus, who, speaking of the baptism of Jesus in the waters of Jordan, remarks, "The Lord, by the mercifulness of his condescension, was not unknown to the nature of the waters in what he did secretly; for (saith David) 'the waters saw him and were afraid;' they all but retreated back and fled from their boundary. Whence the prophet many ages before perceived this, and asked, 'What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou, fleddest? or thou, Jordan, that thou wast driven back?' But they answered and said, We saw the *Creator* of all things in the form of a servant, and not knowing the mystery of the incarnation, we are driven back through fear." [2]

Court. But did not Dionysius of Alexandria believe Christ to be a creature although a Creator?

Witness. I think, my Lord, the very reverse, if I may judge from his language to the heretic Paul of Samosata: — "One only Virgin, the daughter of life, brought forth the living and self-substantial

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[1] Verbum Dei, *per quem facta sunt omnia*, qui est Dominus noster Jesus Christus. l. iii. c. 8. § 2.

[2] Τὸν πάντων Κτιστὴν ἐν μορφῇ δούλου εἴδομεν, καὶ τὸ μυστήριον τῆς οἰκονομίας ἀγνοήσαντες, ἀπὸ τῆς δειλίας ἐλαυνόμεθα. Homil. in Theo. vol. i. p. 262.

WORD, the *uncreated Creator*, the God who came into the world and was unknown, God who is above the heavens, the Maker of heaven, the *Creator of the world.*" [1]

Att. Gen. Is the title of "Lord of Hosts," applied by any of these Fathers to Christ?

Witness. It is so applied by Justin Martyr in a most unequivocal manner, when, speaking of Christ's ascension into heaven, and commenting on the 24th Psalm which predicted it, he says, "When the officers in heaven saw him bearing an uncomely and undignified and inglorious form, they did not recognise him, and asked, *Who is this, the King of Glory?* And the Holy Ghost answers them, either in the person of the Father or in his own, "The *Lord of Hosts* himself, he is the King of Glory." [2] — That Hippolytus referred the sublime part of this Psalm to Christ, in the same manner with Justin Martyr, is evident; and the testimony of both establishes the appropriation of the titles, "Lord of Hosts," and "King of Glory," to the Saviour.[3]

Att. Gen. Now, sir, in the last place I call upon

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[1] Εγεννησε τὸν ζῶντα Λόγον καὶ ἐννυπόστατον, τὸν ἄκιστον καὶ δημιουργόν· τὸν ἐλθόντα ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, καὶ ἄγνωστον Θεὸν, καὶ ὑπερουράνιον Θεὸν, οὐρανοῦ ποιητὴν, τὸν δημιουργὸν τοῦ κοσμοῦ. — Ep. ad Paul. Samos. p. 113.

[2] Dial. cum Tryph. c. xxxvi. p. 133.

[3] Hip. Frag. in Ps. xxiv. 7.

you to state whether the Fathers have ascribed divine worship to be due to Christ.

Witness. The only difficulty I feel on this head is, to select a few out of the many instances which I have it in my power to adduce. Justin says, "The Scriptures prove expressly that Christ was to suffer and to be worshipped, and that he is God." [1] Melito, who wrote A. D. 175, says, "We are not worshippers of senseless stones, but of the only God, who was before all things: and also of his Christ, who was verily God, the WORD, before the worlds;" [2] — and here it is worthy of remark, that this Father says that the Christians worshipped *Christ*, and yet he says also, that they worshipped only *one God;* which two assertions can only be reconciled by our concluding that the unity of that Godhead which they worshipped comprehended the Son as well as the Father.[3] — Clement of Alexandria makes use of this forcible exhortation, — "Believe, O man, in Him who is man and God! Believe, O man, in Him who suffered, and is *worshipped*, the living God!" [4] — Tertullian shows the

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[1] Τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ παθητὸν καὶ προσκυνητὸν καὶ Θεὸν ἀποδεικνύουσιν. — Dial. cum Tryph. c. lxviii. p. 166.

[2] Ὄντως Θεοῦ Λόγου πρὸ αἰώνων, ἐσμεν θρησκευταί. — Rel. Sacr. i. 112.

[3] Burton, p. 58.

[4] Πίστευσον, ἄνθρωπε, ἀνθρώπῳ καὶ Θεῷ· πίστευσον, ἄνθρωπε, τῷ παθόντι, καὶ προσκυνουμένῳ Θεῷ ζῶντι. — Cohort. ad Gent. c. x. p. 84.

same where he says, "The kingdom and the name of Christ is extended every where, is believed every where, is had in reverence by all the nations enumerated above, reigns every where, is *worshipped* every where; he is to all a King, to all a Judge, to all God and Lord." [1] — Minucius Felix, who wrote A. D. 210, having been converted to Christianity, wrote a powerful exposition of the absurdities of Paganism: and in doing this, he left a remarkable proof that the Christians then worshipped Christ; for on their being upbraided with paying adoration to a man who had been crucified as a malefactor, he says, "As for your charging our religion with a man who was a culprit, and with his cross, you wander very far from the truth, when you think either that a culprit would have deserved that we should believe him to be a God, or that a man of this earth could be believed to be a God. That man is indeed to be pitied, whose whole hope rests upon a mortal man." [2] Add to this, that Origen has these words, — "Christ is to be *worshipped* on account of the *Word* of God which is in him." [3]

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[1] Ubique regnat, ubique *adoratur*, — omnibus Rex, omnibus Judex, omnibus Deus et Dominus est. — Adv. Jud. c. ix. p. 192.

[2] Longe de vicinia veritatis erratis, qui putatis Deum credi, aut meruisse noxium, aut potuisse terrenum, &c. — Min. Fel. Octavi. p. 281.

[3] Ὁ δὲ Χριστὸς προσκυνητὸς διὰ τὸν ἐν αὐτῳ Λόγον Θεοῦ. — In Psalm. xcix. 5.

And lastly, I will now adduce the words of Cyprian bishop of Carthage, who flourished A. D. 250, and who has these words, "God the Father has ordered his Son to be *worshipped;*" and the Apostle Paul, remembering the divine command, declares and says, "God hath highly exalted him;" and in the Revelation, the angel resists John who wished to worship him, and says, "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren; *worship Jesus the Lord!*" Jesum Dominum adora.[1]

Att. Gen. My Lord, I shall not call upon this witness for any thing more.

Court. Now, Defendants, you are at liberty to cross-examine the witness.

Priestley. Reverting to the subject of the Ebionites, who followed so close upon the Apostolical

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[1] De Bono Pat. p. 254. In the face of all this evidence, Mr. Lindsey, in his "Apology," (p. 136.) argues that Christ is not to be worshipped; and he says, "The opinion and practice of the ancient Christians before the Council of Nice has been often shown from their writings, that he was not to be worshipped." Dr. Priestley urges it as a very strong argument against the divinity of Christ, that he was not worshipped by the early Christians. (Hist. of Early Opinions, p. 40.) Belsham says, "that Unitarians regard the worship of Christ as idolatrous and unscriptural." — Calm Inquiry, p. 350.

times, and were, I affirm, Unitarians, I must repeat, contrary to the evidence of the witness, that Irenæus no where *directly* calls them heretics ; indeed, Tertullian is the first Christian writer who expressly calls them so.[1]

Witness. This expression will not save you from the charge of having made in your work an unfounded assertion. In the first place, Irenæus states his doubts very strongly, whether the Ebionites can be saved, on account of their disbelief of the divinity of Christ; and this I think you must admit to approach very nearly to a *direct* declaration of their being heretical.[2] But I affirm that Irenæus expressly calls them heretics, where he says, "Since the means of detecting and convincing all *heretics* are various and multifarious, and we have proposed to ourselves to refute all according to their peculiar tenets, we have deemed it necessary to begin by noticing the source and root of them."[3] He then mentions several persons, the discussion of whose doctrines occupies the remainder of the book. He begins with Simon Magus, and observes of him, that all *heresies* took their rise with him. He then notices Menander,

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[1] Hist. of Early Corrupt. vol. i. p. 281. and vol. iii. p. 201.
[2] L. iii. 19. 1. p. 212.
[3] L. iii. 18.

Saturninus, Basilides, Carpocrates, Cerinthus, *the Ebionites*, &c. It surely is impossible to deny that this classification *directly* and expressly includes the Ebionites in the number of heretics. But, in another place, Irenæus speaks still more expressly: adverting to the principles of the Gospel, he says, "There is such a certainty about the Gospels, that even *heretics* themselves bear testimony to them, and each of them endeavours to confirm his own doctrine out of them; for *the Ebionites*, who use the Gospel of St. Matthew only," &c. &c. — I think therefore, that I have established the contrary position, and proved decidedly that the Ebionites were not first called heretics in the time of Tertullian.[1]

Belsham. The witness has quoted St. Paul, where, speaking of Christ, he says, "*By whom, also, he made the world;*" and infers from hence, that Christ was the Creator, whereas the words of St. Paul should be rendered, "*For whom, also, he constituted the ages,*" or, "*with a view to whom he even constituted the former dispensations;*"[2] the preposition διὰ ought here to be rendered *for*, not *by*.

Witness. Do you not render the word, in your version of St. John, i. 3., and in the first chapter of

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[1] Burton, p. 444. See Iræn. iii. 11. 7. p. 189.

[2] Improved Version of the N. T., Heb. i. 2.

the Colossians and 16th verse, "by" and not "for"? And in the second chapter of Hebrews, verse 10, where the word occurs twice in the same line, but where it is applied differently, do you not come back to the rendering of the common version?

Belsham. I allow that I do, but not so in the eleventh chapter of Romans, verse 36; because in these several passages I have considered the proper and appropriate force of the word.

Witness. Excuse me; your reasons are much more apparent: wherever the term is applied to God the Father, *you* consider it to mean the *instrumental cause;* but when it is applied to the Son, *you* understand it as denoting the *final cause.*[1]

Belsham. I feel my sense of it to be correct; and I will add that Jesus Christ is no where in the New Testament said to be the Creator or Maker of the heavens, the earth, the sea, or of any visible natural objects.[2]

Witness. If you would admit, as you ought, that the Christian writers of the earliest times were best able to interpret the Christian doctrines, you would have reason to speak differently, for these writers indifferently style the Son, the *Maker* or *Creator.* I have already alluded to the passage of Irenæus,

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[1] Burton, p. 50.

[2] Calm Inquiry, p. 281.

where he calls Christ "the only begotten Son of God, *Maker of all things — Maker of the world;*" and "The Word of God, the *Framer* and *Creator*, and *Maker of all things*," and also speaks "of the Son *creating*."[1] — Clement of Alexandria speaks of "the Son in the Father, *the Creator;*" — and says, that "the Son has boldness of speech, because he is *God the Creator*," — and again, "Such is the WORD, *the Creator of the world and of man — God the Creator;* — the WORD, the *cause of creation*."[2] — Hippolytus calls him "*the Creator of the universe;*" and "*the Maker of all things.*"[3] — Gregory of Neocæsarea calls him "*Creator and Governor of all things.*"[4] — And Dionysius of Alexandria styles him "the uncreated *Creator*," and "*Creator* together with his Father."[5] — And, in conclusion, by way of summing up the whole, I will show that the Apostle has distinctly and unequivocally declared that Christ was the *Maker of the world*, for ——

Priestley. You may save yourself the trouble of doing so; for I do not see that we are under any

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[1] I. 9. 2.; i. 15. 5.; iv. 38. 3.

[2] Pæd. i. 8. p. 142.; i. 11. p. 156.; iii. c. p. 310. Strom. iv. 8. v. 3.

[3] Beron. et Hel. i. p. 230., and In Theop. 2. vol. i. p. 262.

[4] Orat. Paneg. in Orig. c. 4.

[5] P. 244. See Burton, p. 52.

obligation to believe it, merely because it was an opinion held by an Apostle.[1]

Witness. Then I have done. It is useless to argue with one who holds language and belief such as this.

Att. Gen. One thing at least we gain from this extraordinary avowal; by saying this, the Defendant at least admits that there was an Apostle who had maintained such a doctrine.

Lindsey. The witness has attempted to prove that Christ was not only divine, but *almighty*, which I think he has wholly failed in doing.

Belsham. Mr. Lindsey agrees with me in conceiving those expressions which appear to attribute personal dignity and authority to Christ as wholly figurative. The witnesses plead that the kingdom of Christ is uniformly opposed to that of Satan; but Satan we conceive to be a symbolical and not a real person, and that his government expresses, not the rule of a powerful evil spirit, but the prevalence of idolatry, superstition, and vice. It is therefore reasonable to conclude, that the dominion of Christ is to be understood in the same figurative sense.[2]

Witness. I can only urge that the Fathers

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[1] These are the very words of Priestley. See History of Early Opinions, i. p. 163.

[2] Calm Inquiry, p. 320.

never entertained any such notion as this, when they affirmed that "The WORD was Almighty God," and that he "wanted nothing," and that "he was God Almighty in his own right:" and as to the fanciful notion of Satan being a figurative person, it is so completely at variance with the opinions and belief of the whole Christian world, that no refutation of the doctrine can be expected from me.[1]

Lindsey. To come to another point; I beg to deny, not only that Christ was the Creator, but to affirm that he himself was created; for, to meet your quotation from the Fathers by another, I aver that Dionysius of Alexandria hesitated not to call Christ a creature — *one made.*[2]

Witness. Where, let me ask?

Lindsey. At least, he speaks of God as a *Maker* (Ποιητὴς), with reference to the Son; and hence I conclude, with others, that the Son is a creature.

Witness. This strikes me as exceedingly perverse; for when they who first started this objection brought it against Dionysius, how did he himself answer it? "If," says he, "any of my accusers

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[1] Upon this subject of Evil Spirits, see the elaborate note prefixed to Townshend's New Testament, arranged in chronological and historical order, vol. i. p. 156.

[2] Apology, p. 204.

imagine, because I have called God the Maker and Creator of all things, that I also call him the Maker of Christ, let him observe that I first had called him Father, in which the term Son is included." — And in the following chapter, he allows that he may have applied the word *Maker* to God, with reference to his Son; but he says that he used it "on account of the flesh, which the WORD assumed, and which was made."

Belsham. That Christ was a creature, made and born, is what the proper rendering of St. Paul to the Romans (ix. 5.) shows.

Court. Hand me both the Greek Testament and the common Version: — "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." — Well.

Belsham. My Lord, the sense and force of the passage is this: — "Of whom, by natural descent, Christ came. God, who is over all, be blessed for ever!" — In this sense it is probable that the early Christian writers understood the words, who do not apply it to Christ.[2]

Lindsey. Yes, my Lord; this clause was so read as not to appear to belong to Christ, for the

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[1] Ex Elench. et Apol. c. 10. p. 96. See Burton, p. 365. See also Bull's Defen. Fid. sect. ii. c. 11.

[2] Belsham's *Improved Version*, Rom. ix. 5. and note.

three first centuries.[1] Had the original stood as it now does, the early Fathers would have cited this clause in proof of the divinity of Christ: but neither Justin (I believe), nor Irenæus, nor Tertullian, have quoted it with this view.[2]

Court. Witness, what say you to this?

Witness. My Lord, I must confess that I cancannot show the contrary from Justin Martyr, for a very obvious reason, namely, that he never quotes the passage at all. Irenæus does quote the passage, and with this punctuation: — "Of whom according to the flesh Christ came, who is God over all blessed for ever;"[3] — a division which gives a very different sense from that offered by the Defendant's *Improved* Version. Irenæus must often have read this passage himself; he must often have heard it read: it is, perhaps, not assuming too much to say, that he may have heard it read by Polycarp himself, the immediate disciple of St. John. He must, therefore, have known the manner in which it was customary to read the sentence in the churches; and we have seen that he reads it, not so as to make the doxology at the end a separate and independent clause, but so as

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[1] Lindsey's Sequel, p. 204.

[2] Jones's Analysis of the Epistle to the Romans.

[3] Ex quibus Christus secundum carnem, qui est Deus super omnes benedictus in sæcula.

to affirm that Christ, who came of the Jews according to the flesh was also God over all, blessed for ever. So much for Irenæus: now for Tertullian. "If," says this writer, "the Father and the Son are mentioned together, for sake of distinction we call the Father, *God*, and Jesus Christ, *Lord;* yet, speaking of Christ singly, I can call him God, as Paul did, — *Of whom is Christ, who,* he says, *is God over all, blessed for ever.*" And in the same treatise, referring again to the same text, he quotes it word for word, and stop for stop, the same as it is rendered in our version.[1] Hippolytus, who wrote A. D. 220., begins his sixth chapter thus: — "As to the Apostle saying, *Whose are the Father's,* &c., he declares the mystery of the truth properly and plainly. He who is over all, is God; for he thus says boldly, — *All things are delivered unto me of my Father.* He that is God over all is blessed: and, becoming man, is God for ever."[2] Origen speaks the same thing.[3] —

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[1] Sed apostolum sequar, ut si pariter nominandi fuerint Pater et Filius, Deum *Patrem* appellem, et Jesum Christum *Dominum* nominem. Solum autem Christum potero Deum dicere, sicut idem apostolus, *Ex quibus Christus, qui est,* inquit, *Deus super omnia benedictus in ævum omne.* — Adv. Prax. c. 13. p. 507.

[2] Καὶ ἄνθρωπος γενόμενος, Θεός ἐστιν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. — Noët. 6. p. 10.

[3] Comment. in Rom. vii. 13. vol. iv. p. 612.

Cyprian quotes the same words, in the same way, from St. Paul to prove the subject of his chapter,—"That Christ is God."[1]—Novatian, who believed in the divinity of Christ, quotes this passage twice, to show, as Hippolytus did, that the Father is God, and the Son is God, and yet not two Gods, but one God.[2]—Dionysius of Alexandria, speaking of Christ, calls him twice, *God over all*, in allusion, we may suppose, to this passage, the only one in the New Testament where this expression occurs.[3] And, lastly, the Council of Antioch, convened A. D. 269, against the heresy of Paul of Samosata, asserts this passage in proof that the Son is essentially and substantially God.[4] So much for these words, which the Defendants state to have been so read, turned, and misapplied by the writers of the three first centuries as not to apply to Christ.[5]

Belsham. We have heard much of the writers of the three first centuries, and more of the belief which is reposed upon their authority. But what is there to claim respect in the spurious epistles of Clement, in the tissue of nonsense ascribed to Barnabas, or in the silly visions which pass under the name of Hermas, or in the interpolated epistles of those venerable martyrs Ignatius and Polycarp?

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[1] Test. contr. Jud. c. 6.
[2] Ch. iii. and ch. xxx.
[3] P. 246. and p. 248.
[4] Reliq. Sacr. ii. p. 467.
[5] Burton, p. 83.

And as for the Clementine Homilies, they are, as Dr. Jortin admits, as undoubtedly a romance as "Gulliver's Travels," and contain as much truth as Lucian's "True History:" but, at any rate, they are good evidence of the existence of Unitarianism in the second century.[1]

Witness. I beg, my Lord, to decline answering the Defendants any further questions. If this person speaks the sentiments of the Unitarians, and he has undoubtedly been invested with the honour of being their accredited organ, we are to understand that no confidence is to be placed in the general sense or opinion of the early Christian Fathers. Why, then, have the Unitarians challenged us to adduce the writings of these Fathers against their position, that Christ was solely a human being, by one saying, "It is absolutely necessary that the less learned should be told what, *upon enquiry*, will be found to be undeniably true, viz., that the Fathers of the three first centuries, and consequently all Christian people for upwards of three hundred years after Christ, till the council of Nice, were generally Unitarians?"[2] Another asserts that "the Unitarians have made it evident, from undoubted testimonies of the Fa-

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[1] Belsham's Reply to the Bishop of St. David's, p. 96.
[2] Lindsey's Apology, p. 23, 24.

thers, that the opinion of the Ante-Nicene doctors were either thoroughly Arian, or very near being so; unquestionably nearer to the error in which Arius had fallen, than to the fancies of the schoolmen:"[1] And another, that "the great body of primitive Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, for the two first centuries and upwards, were Unitarians and believers in the simple humanity of Jesus Christ."[2] If all this were true, the foundations of that faith which believes Jesus Christ to be God, are shaken even to the ground. We are naturally led to support that faith by reference to Scripture fairly and reasonably interpreted; but we are called upon by our opponents to investigate, and see whether the contemporaries and immediate followers of the Apostles do not support their interpretation of the sacred Scriptures, and condemn ours. We readily fall in with the proposal, because the works of these writers are the grand repositories of Christian antiquity; and they themselves, as preachers of Christian virtue, and as the defenders of true Christian doctrine, are allowed by the Christian world as the best and highest authority to which we can appeal for the testimony we require; and we have shown, and can further

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[1] Gilbert Clerke, Ante-Nicænesmus, Præf.
[2] Belsham's Calm Inquiry, p. 255.

show, that they mention Christ being born of a Virgin, — becoming man, — of his creating all things, — of his appearing to the Patriarchs, — and various other particulars, as undoubted proofs that the writers who used such expressions believed that Jesus Christ was God, or, at least, that they do not agree with modern Unitarians, the Defendants, who deny that any of these expressions can properly be applied to Christ. To get rid of such plain testimony, the writings of the Fathers bearing on all these points are said by them to be either the errors of the writers, or to be the fables and dreams of impostors, who have interpolated the text of these authors to sanction the doctrine of the unscriptural Trinity in Unity.

Att. Gen. My Lord, I entirely agree with this witness in thinking that it is lost labour, as far as the Defendants are concerned, to show that the early Christian Fathers, the holy writers of the first three centuries, are directly opposed to their doctrine of the simple humanity of Christ. My object in producing his evidence and that of the former witnesses, is to put the matter clearly before the Jury, that they may have all the assistance they can require for forming an impartial decision on this great and momentous question. Now, my Lord, I shall produce witnesses, with another, but no less important view, — to obtain from them not the opinion of ancient writers, but of modern

authors, and that also of their own, as to the sense of the Scriptures on points by which the sole humanity, or the divinity of Christ is to be established.

Court. I think you are quite right. Whom will you call?

Att. Gen. I will call Edward Nares, the author of "Remarks on the Version of the New Testament edited by the Unitarians."

Do you, sir, acknowledge yourself the author of the book now mentioned?

Witness. I do.

Att. Gen. What is the object of your "Reply?"

Witness. To prove that the Unitarians generally, and the Defendant Belsham in particular, have perverted the plain and obvious sense of Scripture in reference to every part of it which bears upon or supports the doctrine of the Trinity.

Att. Gen. What is it that is affirmed respecting the miraculous conception and birth of Christ?

Witness. The Defendant, upon the most unwarrantable plea, declares the greater part of the first, and the whole of the second chapter of St. Matthew, together with the two chapters of St. Luke (with the exception of the five prefatory verses) as all being of such doubtful authority, that they are not to be taken as parts of the

Gospel; and, he adds, "that the account of the miraculous conception of Jesus was probably the fiction of some Gentile convert, who hoped, by elevating the dignity of the founder, to abate the popular prejudice against the *sect*.[1]

Court. Defendant, you will interpose whenever the witnesses make any statement respecting your writings which you consider misunderstood.

Belsham. My Lord, I thank you; I shall not fail to do so.

Att. Gen. I now ask you, sir, whether this assertion be true or false, in your opinion; because, if it be true, it will follow that the sense of the Christian Church is mistaken, and the faith of Christians, instead of being founded upon rock, is built upon the mere sand; but, on the other hand, if it be false, I would ask whether, upon your oath, this does not amount to blasphemy?

Witness. I declare it, as my own opinion and as the belief of the soundest divines of Christendom, to be false; and the notion of elevating the Saviour of the world to the dignity of the heroes and demigods of heathen mythology to be an unquestionable and disgusting blasphemy; for need any, with the Revelation of St. John in their

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[1] Improved Version of the New Testament, Notes to Matthew, ch. i.

hands, which even such pruning expositors of Scripture as the Defendants, concede to be genuine, — need any to have forged such an account of the *birth* of Christ with materials such as we have in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke? They give him a *poor* Virgin for his mother, a *small village* for his birth-place, a *stable* for his nursery, and a *manger* for his cradle; and they give him these wretched and lowly investments — for what? "In order," says the Defendant, "to lessen Jewish prejudices, and to raise him to the rank of a demigod!" Him, who declares himself, in another part of Scripture, to be "the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, unto whom every creature that is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, and all things in them, ascribe blessing and glory and dominion for ever and ever!" Permit me here to ask, what mythological idol could ever be compared to the Lamb of the Apocalypse, the LORD of LORDS and KING of KINGS? What demigod of Paganism ever made such an appearance as the WORD of GOD in the Revelation of St. John? — "I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he who sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and with righteousness he judgeth and maketh war. And his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. And he had a name written which none knoweth but himself: and he was

clothed with a mantle dipped in blood: and his name is called THE WORD OF GOD: and the armies which are in heaven followed him on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, that with it he might smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he shall tread the wine-press of the fierce anger of Almighty God: and he had on his mantle and on his thigh, a name written, KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS." If I have shown any undue warmth in reciting this passage, and giving my evidence on this point, I trust the Court will excuse it, and attribute it to the feelings of disgust and indignation excited in my mind, by those who talk of *elevating* such a mighty and august personage as this, to the rank of a demigod![1]

Att. Gen. To go from this point to another. — What is your opinion and belief, as to the Jehovah of the Old Testament being the same with Christ in the New? and how does this opinion and belief either differ from, or agree with, what the Defendant Belsham has published?

Witness. On this point I am directly at issue with all the Defendants. My firm opinion is, that the Logos of St. John was the *Jehovah Adonai* of

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[1] Nares's Reply, p. 38.

the Jews; the Angel of God's Presence; the Angel of both Covenants; the Appearing God. It is thus that we can fairly assimilate the terms of the Old and New Testament, and illustrate the one by the other. When JEHOVAH appeared in the Shechinah to the patriarchs, it was "in the glory of God;" and is not the Son of God described by the Apostle to the Hebrews as "the brightness of God's glory?" Was not the Angel that was sent to the patriarchs above every thing distinguished by that most peculiar circumstance of bearing the very name of God or JEHOVAH, a name wholly incommunicable to creatures? — "Behold! I send an angel to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared; beware of *him*, and obey *his* voice; provoke *him* not, for he will not pardon your trangressions, for MY NAME is in *him*." Now this Angel is repeatedly spoken of by Moses as JEHOVAH, in a manner the most striking and remarkable. Nothing, however, is more to the purpose than the relation given in Exodus, where it is said, "*The Angel of the Lord* appeared unto him (Moses) in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and the bush was not consumed; and Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD (*Jehovah*) saw that he turned aside to see, GOD called unto him out of the midst of the bush." (iii. 2—4.) It is certain that *the* ANGEL of God,

who, under the patriarchal and legal dispensations, had the name of GOD in him, was called JEHOVAH, spake in the first person as JEHOVAH, calling himself "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," appeared in the visible glory of God, was worshipped as God; yet we know, and are assured upon testimony the most unexceptionable, that "no man has seen the *Father* at any time." But this great and ineffable name of JEHOVAH was also by the prophets given to the Messiah; for the prophecy of Jeremiah declares that the name by which the Messiah shall be called is, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.[1] And what do we read in Isaiah? "I, even I, am JEHOVAH, besides me there is NO SAVIOUR;" and yet St. John emphatically declares Jesus Christ to be the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.[2] The great name of JEHOVAH being thus given by the prophets to the Messiah, and, by implication at least, if not directly, ascribed to Jesus Christ by the writers of the New Testament, is it any wonder to find the Apostle to the Hebrews insisting so much

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[1] Ch. xxiii. 6.

[2] See Nares's Reply, p. 88. and note.

Compare Isaiah, ch. xliii. and John, iv. 42.

The Prophet also says (xliv. 6.): "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the First and the Last, and besides me there is no God."—Now, this very character of the God of Israel, Christ assumes to himself in the Revelation, "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last." (Rev. xxii. 13.)

on the superiority of Christ above the Prophets of the Old Testament, describing him as the "effulgence and the brightness of God's glory," and "the express image of his person;" as "sitting on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by *inheritance* obtained a more *excellent* NAME than they" — "a NAME which is *above* every NAME" — "that at the NAME of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father?"[1] These are the several plain and strong declarations of the Apostle Paul: but, to sum up the whole, and to bring the matter to a perfect focus, I will add that clear, explicit, and incontrovertible passage of this Apostle to his disciple Titus: — "The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the *great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity. These things speak and exhort."[2]

Att. Gen. But one of the Defendants has al-

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[1] Philip. ii. 9—11. [2] Chap. ii. 13—15.

ready declared that there is no obligation to credit such things, merely because it is the belief of an Apostle; so we will proceed to some other point. How, then, sir, do the Defendants, and Belsham in particular, render the words Υἱὸς Θεοῦ, where it occurs in the New Testament?

Witness. Invariably so, as that the same expression may be applied indifferently to any pious and good Christian whatever.

Att. Gen. How is this?

Witness. They say the Unitarians acknowledge that our Lord fully confessed himself to be *The Son of God;* but then they do not grant it in that high sense which he claimed, and the Evangelists and Apostles ascribe to him; and they render Υἱὸς Θεοῦ, "The Son of *a* God;" that is, a Son of Jupiter, or Mercury, or the god of Siam, perhaps. And in the passage of St. Matthew (xiv. 33.) where the Disciples are described as worshipping Christ, saying, "Truly Thou art the Son of God," after he had performed the most stupendous miracle, not as an inspired Prophet, but upon his own inherent authority, and they acknowledged in the expression both his divinity and his Messiahship; they render the words, "Truly Thou art *a* son of God!" which amounts to nothing more than an acknowledgment that he was a religious person: "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called *the children of God.*" When our Saviour

was crucified, his enemies reviled him, because he had said that he was *The Son of God:* this was no blasphemy, as the High Priests declared it was, had it been spoken in the sense which the Unitarians give it, instead of its being claimed by Christ, as being equal to God, and as the title of the Messiah.

Att. Gen. How do they understand and render Logos, The Word of God?

Witness. The Court will best see by referring to the first verse of St. John's Gospel, as given and explained in their New and Improved Version. The words are these in our version: — "In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God; and the Word was God:" which are thus rendered by them: — "The Word was in the beginning; and the Word was with God; and the Word was *a* God." Then follows the explanation: — "The Word, or Jesus Christ, through whom God revealed his word, was in the beginning of the Gospel dispensation; and The Word, or Jesus, was with God, withdrawing from the world to receive divine instructions and qualifications for his ministry: he was then invested with extraordinary miraculous powers, and thus, in Jewish phraseology, was called a god." [1]

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[1] See Improved Version, and notes upon John i. 1.

Att. Gen. How do they get over the plain and simple construction and grammar of the original Greek?

Witness. This is all made to give way to their conjectures; and articles, definite and indefinite, are subtracted, added, or omitted, to answer the constrained and perverted sense, or rather nonsense, of this unwarrantable interpretation.

Court. How is that memorable confession of St. Thomas's faith rendered, when Christ removed his unbelief by showing the wounds that had been inflicted upon him at his crucifixion, and he cried out, "My Lord, and my God!"

Witness. The force and sense of these words, spoken and solely addressed to Jesus, are got over by the assertion of the Defendants, that they are not a confession, but an exclamation; an exclamation to the Almighty, meaning, My Lord and my God, how great is thy power![1]

Att. Gen. How do you meet this?

Witness. By affirming that the words speak a direct and unequivocal confession of our Saviour's divine nature. The Defendant says they are an exclamation; but it is quite certain that the words, "My Lord," refer to our Saviour; and in an exclamation like that of Thomas, which was occasioned

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[1] John xx. 29. and note of Improved Version.

by the joyful certainty of his Master's resurrection, we can hardly separate the two members of the sentence, and apply one to Christ and the other to God. Had St. John so understood it, he would have taken care to record it in such a manner (supposing him to have entertained the same notions with the Defendants) as not to give it *the semblance* of a direct acknowledgment of Christ's divine nature. He would have told us, that Thomas said, My Lord, and shortly afterwards, My God, or something to that effect. But a fatal objection to the Defendant's interpretation is this: — St. John says expressly, that this exclamation *was addressed to Jesus:* — "Thomas answered and said *unto him.*" — Besides which, our Saviour commended it as a confession of faith; which it would not have been, had it expressed only surprise. This passage is more deserving attention, because it is the first time that Christ is called God by any of his disciples.[1]

Att. Gen. How do they explain that passage of St. John, in which our Saviour told the Jews, in his indignation, "Ye are of your father the Devil: he was a murderer from the beginning?"

Witness. They affirm that the Devil here mentioned is the *principle of moral evil personified;* and

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[1] Bp. Blomfield's Five Lectures on St. John's Gospel, p. 86.

that wicked men are said to be *his children*, and to resemble him.[1] Now, to say that the wicked are called his children, and that he is a fictitious person, would, by parity of reason, imply that the good and virtuous, called *the children of God*, are the children of an unreal and illusive being. But it is manifest that one of the objects of Christ's coming upon earth was, that he might destroy the works of the Devil, a real but fallen Spirit, whom God permits to tempt mankind in order to make trial of their faith and virtue; for, says St. John, "He that committeth sin is of the Devil, for the Devil sinneth from the beginning; *for this purpose* the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil."[2] The Evil One is, therefore, spoken of in Scripture as the sovereign and head of a kingdom, — "The Prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that worketh disobedience."[3] And against this kingdom of Satan the kingdom of Christ was opposed, and subdued it: — "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."[4] But independent of this,

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[1] Improved Version, note to John viii. 44.
[2] 1 John, iii. 8.
[3] Ephes. ii. 2.
[4] Luke xi. 21, 22.

our Saviour speaks of him again and again as a real being, and particularly where he says, "The enemy that sowed the tares (among the wheat) is the Devil." [1] And this is made positively certain by what St. Paul says, that Satan can transform himself into the appearance of "an angel of light." [2] as no doubt he did, when he tempted the first Adam in Paradise, and the second in the wilderness.

Att. Gen. My Lord, I have no further questions to ask of this witness.

Court. Then, Defendants, you are at liberty to begin.

Belsham. I would ask whether we have not assigned good and substantial reasons for our rejection of those parts of the Gospel which have been mentioned? and whether we have not adduced the testimony of the learned to support our disbelief of these being genuine parts of Scripture?

Witness. I, for one, think the reverse.

Belsham. My Lord, this is not candid. I will therefore state each of the six objections we have against considering nearly the whole of the first chapter of St. Matthew, and the two first chapters of St. Luke as spurious, when I will call upon the

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[1] Matt. xiii. 39. [2] 2 Cor. xi. 14.

witness to grant at least the force and truth of the evidence we produce. Our rejection of these parts is founded, first, on the ground of the Evangelists having affirmed (if what is here said to be his writing is true) that Jesus had completed his thirteenth year in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, by which Jesus must have been born fifteen years before the death of Augustus: thus Herod, who died A. U. C. 751., must have been dead upwards of two years before Christ was born; a fact which at once invalidates the whole narrative.[1]

Witness. Stop, stop; you are rather too rapid in drawing your conclusion. Who says that Herod was dead two years before the birth of Christ?

Belsham. I refer you to Lardner for the corroboration of the fact.[2]

Witness. Stay. Here, at page 432. of the first volume of his works, he says, "It may be made appear *several ways*, that Jesus was born *above a year*, probably *above two years*, before Herod died." And, after making a comparison of two other computations of Herod's death, he concludes thus: — "Which is the truth, I dare not determine."[3]

Belsham. This does not make against us.

Witness. Nor for you. All that can be said is

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[1] Improved Version, note to Luke i. 4.

[2] Ibid. Nares's Reply, p. 12.

this, that Lardner makes the computation on the notion that Herod died A. U. C. 748. or 749., and not upon that of 751.; and he, and the learned who have endeavoured to clear this point, draw no such hasty conclusion as that at which you have arrived.

Belsham. The point at least is left undecided. But if this argument be deemed insufficient, I will go on to show, in the next place, that Epiphanius and Jerome state the copies of St. Matthew's Gospel used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites, that is to say, the ancient Hebrew Christians, to omit these parts of St. Matthew and St. Luke; and, what is more, the two chapters of St. Luke were rejected by Marcion, a *reputed* heretic of the second century, who was a man of learning and integrity, though represented by his adversaries as holding some extravagant opinions.[1]

Witness. Your argument is this: — St. Matthew is known to have written his Gospel for the Hebrew Christians, therefore the Gospel used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites was the genuine one which St. Matthew wrote. Now, before we grant the conclusion, let us look at the premises. The terms Hebrew Christians, Nazarenes, and Ebionites, which are here artfully classed together, as if synonymous, were decidedly distinct. The Hebrew Christians

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[1] Improved Version, Matt. i., Luke i., notes.

for whom St. Matthew wrote, were the body of Jewish converts at his time, viz. at latest A. D. 66. The Nazarenes and Ebionites of whom Epiphanius speaks A. D. 370, were posterior to the former three hundred years. The Nazarenes, indeed, were a *sect* of the Hebrew Christians, holding some tenets peculiar to themselves, and separated from the main body; the name having been first applied to those who, banished from Jerusalem by Adrian, A. D. 130, settled in the north of Galilee. The Ebionites, by some authors confounded with the Nazarenes, by others distinguished from them, appear to have for the most part agreed with them in their main opinions and character, but to have been separated from them by some partial differences. We are told first "on the authority of Epiphanius and Jerome, the narrative of the miraculous conception appears to have been wanting in the copy used by the Nazarenes and Ebionites." This statement is not quite correct. Epiphanius treats of the Nazarenes and Ebionites as two distinct sects. The former, he tells us, use a *full* copy of St. Matthew; the latter use one much altered, and deficient in the two first chapters, as it begins with the account of the baptism. St. Jerome frequently mentions "a Gospel according to the Hebrews which the Nazarenes use," and by this he probably intends the Ebionite Gospel mentioned by Epiphanius, but he no where testifies the fact of its wanting the two

first chapters. Epiphanius also says of the Nazarenes, that sect of Hebrew Christians who are commonly understood to have held other opinions, that he cannot affirm for certain, whether they believe that our Saviour was begotten of Mary by the Holy Ghost; a doubt which implies the persuasion on his part, that some Jewish Christians, at least, received the accounts. St. Jerome expressly says of them, that "they believe in Christ, the Son of God, born of the Virgin."[1] But who, let me ask, is Marcion? — an unjustly reputed heretic? No: Marcion maintained notions the most wild that can be conceived. He affirmed, that our Saviour was man only in outward figure; that he was not born like other men, but appeared first on earth in a full-grown form. He rejected the Old Testament, and mutilated the New where it contained quotations from the Old. He received only eleven books of the New Testament; no Gospel besides St. Luke's, and this completely disguised by alterations, interpolations, and omissions, of which a long account is given by Epiphanius. His copy began thus: — In the fifteenth year of Tiberius, Christ *descended into Capernaum*, &c. And this is the Marcion whose authority is to invalidate St. Luke.[2]

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[1] Quarterly Review on the Improved Version, vol. i. p. 324.
[2] Ibid. p. 326.

Belsham. I understand all this differently. If, however, you reject it, I state, in the third place, that St. Luke does not mention, in his preface to the Acts of the Apostles, that his Gospel contained any thing more than records of the public ministry of Jesus, and makes no allusion to the remarkable incidents contained in the two first chapters, which, therefore, probably were not written by him.

Witness. Your objection amounts only to what you are pleased to term a probability, which is no argument, and much less any proof, against the validity of the chapters in question; and even this only arises from St. Luke having, in the preface to the Acts, made no allusion to the incidents in these chapters. Neither did he make any allusion to the remarkable incidents in the third chapter, when John baptized Jesus, and a voice from heaven declared him to be his beloved Son; so that there is the same ground for the *probability* of the spuriousness of the third, as of the two first chapters.

Belsham. The subject of the two first chapters and the third chapter are very dissimilar, and infinitely distant in importance.

Priestley. Justin Martyr is the first writer who mentions the miraculous conception.[1]

Belsham. He is so: but, in the fourth place, if the account of the miraculous conception of Jesus

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[1] History of Early Opinions, vol. iv. p. 107.

be true, he could not have been the offspring of David and Abraham, from whom it was predicted the Messiah should descend.

Witness. Both Joseph and Mary, the reputed father and the actual mother of Jesus, were descended from the same lineage, and this lineage was to be traced, according to all Jewish law and custom, by the side of the espoused husband of Mary. It is granted on all hands that Matthew, who wrote principally for the Jews, carries his genealogy to Abraham, through whom the promise of the Messiah was given to the Jews; but Luke, who wrote for the Gentiles, carried his genealogy to Adam, to whom the promise of the Saviour was made in behalf of all his posterity: now, from Abraham to David the two genealogies coincide, and it must be remembered that both Evangelists published their Gospels at a time when the general tables of pedigree were still preserved, and when every genealogical title which proposed to trace the descent of one who claimed to be the expected Messiah, would be inspected with the most scrupulous and jealous anxiety; and we have no where read that any objection to the accuracy of the Evangelists was raised by their contemporaries.[1]

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[1] See the full consideration of this subject in the note to the ninth section of Townsend's first volume of "The New Testament arranged in Chronological and Historical Order," p. 51.

Belsham. This is a subject of far too great intricacy to be discussed here. I proceed, therefore, to the fifth objection. There is no allusion to any of these extraordinary facts (the miraculous conception and birth) in either of the succeeding histories of Luke, or in any other books of the New Testament.[1]

Witness. Could we admit, which we cannot, that "no allusion is made to these events in any other passage of the New Testament," we could by no means allow that this applies as an objection to the miraculous birth exclusively. Many highly important facts of our Saviour's history are not alluded to in other parts of the sacred writings. But, far from conceding the point, I positively aver that most frequent allusion is made to the accounts of his supernatural birth. I affirm, that this fact is implied throughout his whole history; that it is implied wherever he is spoken of as being God himself, and the Son of God; that it is supposed and understood in the whole doctrine of the atonement. I maintain also, that where we read, "God sent forth his Son, born of a woman," we have not merely an allusion to his miraculous conception, but an express mention of it. It is clear to the most superficial reader of the "Improved Version," that the translators think proper to pervert, to

[1] Note to Luke, ch. i.

other meanings, all the sentences by which the doctrines of the divinity of our Saviour and of the atonement are proved.[1]

Belsham. The expression of being "born of a woman," bears no allusion to the *supposed* miraculous conception of Christ. It is a common Jewish phrase to express a proper human being.[2]

Witness. But the expression "born of a woman," is manifestly too general to mark out him who, in a particular manner, was to be the "*seed* of the woman, who was to bruise the serpent's head;" and, when taken in conjunction with other passages of similar import, surely cannot be misunderstood. "God sent

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[1] The Improved Version reviewed by the Quarterly, vol. i. p. 328.

[2] Improved Version, Gal. iv. 4. note.

The condemnation of the iniquity of Adam's progeny was universal. To reverse the universal sentence, and to purge the universal corruption, a Redeemer was to be found, pure of every strain of inbred and contracted guilt: and since every person produced in the natural way could not but be of the contaminated race, the purity requisite to the efficacy of the Redeemer's atonement made it necessary that the manner of his conception should be supernatural. The incarnation of the Divine WORD, so roundly asserted by St. John, and so clearly implied in innumerable passages of Holy Writ, in any other way had been impossible, and the Redeemer's atonement inadequate and ineffectual; insomuch that, had the extraordinary manner of our Lord's generation made no part of the Evangelical narrative, the opinion might have been defended as a thing clearly implied in the Evangelical doctrine." —Bp. Horsley's Sermons, vol. iii. p. 80.

his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." — "The WORD was made flesh, and dwelt among us." — "God sent forth his Son *made* of a woman, *made* under the law."

Belsham. I say, with the disciples of Jesus, "This is a hard saying, who can bear it?" I proceed, therefore, to state, in the last place, that John the Baptist should have been ignorant of the person of Christ is not probable, if this narrative be true; and there are many other circumstances in the story which bear an improbable and fabulous aspect.[1]

Witness. It has been pretty generally supposed, that John knew not the person of Jesus before his baptism. I do not feel certain that this was the case. John, indeed, in two instances, declared that he "knew him not:" but I question if more be implied in these than that he knew him not as the Messiah, till he was especially revealed on his approach to be baptized.[2] And as to your charge, that some of the facts have a fabulous appearance, surely this is no other than a direct departure from real argument to vague and unintelligible insinuation. I would ask, where are these marks of fiction? From what proofs is

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1 Improved Version, Luke i., note.

2 Nares's Reply, p. 34. This is the opinion of Beza, Lightfoot, Grotius, and Doddridge.

this inference drawn? Do not all the facts of our Saviour's history, his several miracles, his resurrection, bear the same fabulous appearance? that is, are they not facts wholly out of the common course of nature, which we should never have believed if they had not been pressed upon our conviction by evidence which we cannot question? How far the Defendants may carry this sort of scepticism, I know not; but the same reasoning, and the same grounds for disbelief, would consistently carry them to regard all that our Saviour taught and did, to be a "cunningly devised fable."[1]

Belsham. We proceed on principles of reason for the confirmation of our belief, not upon the mere *dicta* of others. I affirm, that our Lord is repeatedly spoken of as the son of Joseph, without any intimation on the part of the historian that this language is incorrect.

Witness. I admit that our Saviour is mentioned, I think, as many as five times, as the son of Joseph. In one, the name is given by a new convert, ignorant, as yet, of his nature and ministry. (John i. 45.) In another, it is urged as an objection to his mission by the unbelieving Jews. (John vi. 42.) In two others, his hearers, astonished at what they hear and see, exclaim, "Is not this

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[1] Quarterly Review on Improved Version, p. 328.

Joseph's son?" (Luke iv. 22. Mark vi. 3.) and he expressly disclaims the title, by saying, "No prophet is accepted in his own country." In the fifth instance, his genealogy begins: "Being (*as was supposed*) the son of Joseph."

Belsham. The last instance you have mentioned should be rendered, "Being entered in the public registers, the son of Joseph."

Witness. I will take it either way: for the first refers only to the vulgar opinion; the second regards the legal mode of tracing his ancestry through the espoused husband of his mother: neither tends to prove what you regard as the fact of his being the actual son of Joseph.[1]

Belsham. Sufficient authority, of a clear and undisputed kind, and natural probabilities, compel us to regard the story of his miraculous conception, if not his birth, as a fable.

Witness. It must be borne in mind that the Gospels were read in different churches from the earliest times, and copies of them were widely dispersed. Would, then, the Evangelists themselves have concurred in such a forgery? Would Christians of all countries, sects, and opinions, have been willing, silently and at once, to adopt it? Would history have preserved no record of such an alteration in the code of Christian faith?

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[1] Quarterly Review of the Improved Version, p. 330.

Would no doubts or suspicions have remained in the minds of any? Would no enemies of Christianity have heard of such an interpolation, and gladly have exposed it? Would the contending sects of Christians never have urged it against each other, in the heat of religious warfare?[1]

Belsham. How all this might have been, I cannot stop to enquire, though I think all your difficulties capable of an easy solution. I now advert to another topic which you have urged against us. You endeavour to prove that Christ is the Angel sent, "the appearing Angel" of the Old Testament. We allow that he was an *Angel* or *Messenger* as the prophets which preceded him were; and that he was the highest of *this order* of celestial messengers; but beyond this we cannot go.

Witness. We read in the third chapter of Malachi, "Behold, I will send my *Messenger*, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the *Lord*, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the *Messenger* of the Covenant, *whom ye delight in*, saith the Lord of Hosts." — This is the passage as it stands in the received text. Now, let us observe, first, that the person speaking is described to be the Lord of Hosts, who, in the

[1] Quarterly Review on the Improved Version, vol. i. p. 331.

original is JEHOVAH SABAOTH, for Isaiah says that the *name* of our Redeemer is *Jehovah Sabaoth:*[1] "Behold! I will send my *Messenger* before ME." — *Messenger* is here proper: it evidently alludes to Elias, or rather to his representative, John the Baptist, as our Lord himself applied it: — "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of JEHOVAH; make straight in the desert a highway for our GOD." — "And the LORD (that is, JEHOVAH ADONAI, the same whom David called his Lord, as our Saviour remarked), HE shall come to HIS Temple, the Temple of Jerusalem, that is, the Temple of *God*, the Temple of the *Lord of Hosts*!"[2]

Att. Gen. My Lord, as this is a point of the greatest importance, I beg permission of the Court to call up the witness Horsley again, to put one question to him upon this matter.

Court. You have leave to do so, provided your question bears upon this subject, and this subject only.

Att. Gen. Call again the witness Horsley. — I would beg to ask you one question more, sir: do you consider the Jehovah of the Old Testament to be the Messiah of the New; if so, how do you show it?

Horsley. I will prove it from the passage of

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[1] Ch. xlvii. 4.

[2] Nares's Reply, p. 94.

Malachi which is so well taken up by the witness Nares, the consideration of which is now before the Court. A Covenant is to be established between JEHOVAH and his people; proposed on the part of God, and to be embraced by the people. The Messenger of the Covenant can be no other than the Messenger sent by JEHOVAH to make this proposal. The Messenger of the Covenant is therefore JEHOVAH's Messenger;—if his *Messenger*, his *Servant;* for a message is a service: it implies a person sending, and a person sent. In the person who sendeth, there must be authority to send; submission to that authority in the person sent. The Messenger, therefore, of the Covenant is the servant of the Lord JEHOVAH: but the same person who is the Messenger, is the Lord JEHOVAH himself; *not the same person* with the sender, but *bearing the same name*, because united in that mysterious nature, and undivided substance, which the name imports. The same person, therefore, is Servant and Lord; and, by uniting these characters in the same person, what does the Prophet but describe that great mystery of the Gospel, the union of the nature which governs and the nature which serves; the union of the divine and human nature in the person of the Christ? This doctrine, therefore, was no less than that of the divinity of the Messiah; a novelty, as we are told, in the third and fourth century after the birth of

Christ; an invention of the dark and superstitious ages![1]

Belsham. I do not understand how he that said, "I will send my Angel," can be the Angel whom he said he would send.

Att. Gen. The Father is only known through the Son; but the Son as Jehovah, speaks as Jehovah, though not unfrequently with a marked distinction of persons.[2] Is not this what you mean to say?

Priestley. I admit it in this instance.[3]

Horsley. Permit me to explain myself further by stating, that the ancient Jews had a persuasion, which their descendants retain at this day, that the true pronunciation of the word "JEHOVAH" was unknown; and lest they should miscal the sacred name of God, they scrupulously abstained from attempting to pronounce it[4]; insomuch, that, when

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[1] Horsley's Sermons, vol. iii. p. 24.

[2] Nares's Reply, p. 85. note.

Compare Exod. xxiii. 22. and xxxii. 34. and xxxiii. 2.

[3] Dr. Priestley admits that "though the angel here be spoken of by the Divine Being as a *third* person, and *distinct* from *himself*, they *must*, nevertheless, in effect have been one." — Priestley, as quoted by Nares, p. 86. n.

[4] Among the Hindoos, O—M is a mystic emblem of the Deity, forbidden to be pronounced but in silence. It is a syllable formed of the *Sanscreet* letters ă, ŭ, ŏ, which, in composition, coalesce, and make ō with the nasal consonant *m*.

the sacred books were publicly read in their synagogues, the reader, wherever this name occurred, was careful to substitute for it that other word of the Hebrew language which answers to the English word "Lord." The learned Jews who were employed by Ptolemy to turn the Scriptures of the Old Testament into Greek have every where, in their translation, substituted the corresponding word of the Greek language. Later translators have followed their mischievous example,—mischievous in its consequences, though innocently meant: and our English translators, among the rest, in innumerable instances, instead of the original "JEHOVAH," which ought upon all occasions to have been religiously retained, have put the more general title of "the LORD." A flagrant instance of this occurs in that solemn proem of the Decalogue, in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, "I am the LORD thy God," so we read in our English Bibles, "who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." In the original it is, "I am JEHOVAH thy God, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."—Another example of the same unhappy alteration we find in that famous passage of the

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(AUM.) The first letter stands for the *Creator*, the second for the *Preserver*, and the third for the *Destroyer* of the Evil Spirit, or *Regenerator*. — Dr. Adam Clarke on John i.

hundred and twentieth Psalm, "The Lord said unto my Lord;" which is, in the Hebrew, "JEHOVAH said unto my Lord."—If translators have used this unwarrantable licence of substituting a title of the Deity for his proper name in texts where that name is applied to the Almighty Father, — and in one particular, when the Father seems to be distinguished by that name from Jesus as man, — it is not to be wondered at that they should make a similar alteration in passages where the Messiah is evidently the person intended. One among many other examples of this kind is found in Joel, where the prophet, speaking of the blessings of the Messiah's day, saith, "And it shall come to pass, that whoever shall call on the name of the LORD (in the original, JEHOVAH), shall be delivered." Here, the Holy Spirit has vouchsafed to be his own interpreter; and his interpretation, one would think, might be decisive. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, alleges this passage of Joel, to prove that all men shall be saved by believing in Christ Jesus. But how is the Apostle's assertion, that all men shall be saved by faith in Christ, confirmed by the prophet's promise of deliverance to all who should devoutly invocate JEHOVAH, unless Christ were, in the judgment of St. Paul, the JEHOVAH of the prophet Joel?[1]

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[1] Horsley's Sermon xxx. vol. 3. p. 6.

Court. That, sir, is sufficient.

Belsham. With respect to the words of Thomas, on being convinced that our Lord had actually risen from the grave, by seeing and feeling in Jesus, who addressed him, the wounds which had been inflicted on his body at his crucifixion, I have the authority of Beza for saying, that they are "an exclamation;" as if, in his astonishment, he had said, "My Lord, and my God, how great is thy power!" [1]

Witness. I do not remember what Beza says; but the impression on my mind is, that he does not go quite to this length.

Att. Gen. Here is the volume of Beza on the table; hand it to the witness.

Witness. It is as I thought. Beza says, "These words are not merely an exclamation, but an actual address of Thomas *to Jesus*, calling him, both *his* Lord, and *his* God; an indisputable precedent for invoking Christ as the true God." [2]

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[1] Improved Version, John xx. 28. and note.

[2] Hæc igitur verba quæ sequuntur non sunt tantum admirantis Thomæ, *ut hunc locum eludebant Nestoriani*, sed ipsum illum Jesum et verum Deum ac Dominum suum compellantis. Male igitur vulgate interpretatur hic locus, recto casu *Dominus meus et Deus meus;* nec alius est locus in his libris expressior, de Christo, ut *vero Deo* invocando. — Beza, quoted by Nares, p. 181.

Belsham. I am still right in saying that Beza called the passage an exclamation.

Witness. Yes; but I must be permitted to add, not right nor honest in stopping there, when he said, this is *not only* an exclamation, *but* an address to Christ himself; the WORD who was with God, and was God.

Belsham. This reminds me of another point. I have already said that the expression "the Word was with God," signifies that Jesus was in retirement with God, qualifying for his ministry; in the same way that it is said of Moses, that "he was there in the mount forty days and forty nights." Now, in further proof that this does not mean, that Jesus was consubstantial with God, I have this unquestionable evidence. St. John says, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John;"—a man sent *from* God!—a plain illustration of the former text, and implies that he had been first *with* God.[1] This, I think, makes the speculation of the witness to be of no weight.

Witness. Let us adopt this reasoning. Then, because John was sent *from* God, therefore he was first *with* God, so that John as truly came from heaven as the divine Logos. John was as truly from above, as truly with God from the beginning, as truly came forth from God when he came into

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[1] Improved Version, John i. 6. and note.

the world, as the blessed Jesus. But what says John the Baptist himself? So far from being on any footing of equality with *Him*, whose forerunner he was appointed to be, — "*He* that cometh *from above*," saith he, "is above all. He that is of the earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; *he* that cometh from *heaven*, is above all:"—but how *above all*, if he himself and every other prophet came *from* heaven, and came *from above* in like manner? But what does the Saviour tell us of those who come *from* above, in the way that he came? — "No man hath seen the Father," he says, "but he that is from God; he hath seen the Father." Can any one say or believe this of John the Baptist and of Christ, indifferently? Assuredly not.

Court. Defendants, do you desire to ask any thing further of this witness?

Belsham. No, my Lord.

Court. Call again the witness Burton.

Burton. Here am I, my Lord.

Court. The Defendant Priestley incidentally mentioned, during the cross-examination of the last witness, that Justin Martyr was the first writer who mentions the miraculous conception: do you admit this to be the case?

Burton. By no means, my Lord; for Ignatius, half a century previously, warning the Ephesians to beware of those who taught false doctrines, and

whom he considered almost incurable, says, "There is one physician, fleshly and spiritual, made and not made, God born in the flesh, true life in death, both of Mary and of God, first capable of suffering, and then incapable:"[1] — which passage reminds us of the expressions of St. John and St. Paul, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," and "God was made manifest in the flesh."— But in another place, after quoting from St. Paul, "*Where is the wise, where is the disputer?* where is the boasting of those who are called intelligent?" he adds, "for our God, Jesus Christ, was conceived by Mary, according to the dispensation of God; of the seed, indeed, of David, but of the Holy Ghost."[2] — Ignatius, also, alludes to the star which appeared at the birth of Christ, which shows that he believed the beginning of St. Matthew's Gospel to be genuine.[3]

Court. Call the next witness. What is his name?

Att. Gen. Layman Burgh. This gentleman,

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[1] Ἐν σαρκὶ γενόμενος Θεὸς, ἐν θανάτῳ ζωὴ ἀληθινὴ, καὶ ἐκ Μαρίας καὶ ἐκ Θεοῦ. — Epist. ad Eph. c. 7. p. 13.

[2] Ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστὸς ἐκυοφορήθη ὑπὸ Μαρίας κατ' οἰκονομίαν Θεοῦ, ἐκ στέρματος μὲν Δαβὶδ, Πνεύματος δὲ ἁγίου. — Epist. ad Eph. c. 18. p. 15.

[3] Burton's Anti-Nicene Test. pp. 22. 28.

my Lord, is the author of "A Scriptural Confutation of the Arguments against the One Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, produced by the Rev. Mr. Lindsey in his late 'Apology.'" [1] For, my Lord, I bring no more witnesses, as I intended, in support of the opinions of the ancient Christian writers, nor do I adduce any in support of modern authors, or to show the opinion of the learned from the earliest to the most recent times; but I now go upon the design of showing the errors of the Defendants, simply from the Scriptures themselves.

Court. I understand.

Att. Gen. Pray, sir, tell us what is the "Apology" or defence which the Defendant Lindsey has published, the arguments of which you have aimed to confute?

Witness. It is the defence or excuse for the Defendant's conversion from the faith of the Church of England, to the belief, or, more properly speaking, to the disbelief, of Unitarianism.

Att. Gen. What is known of the public character of this Defendant?

Witness. He is known to be a conscientious

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[1] This confutation was written by a layman (said to be Mr. Burgh) in 1774, immediately upon the publication of the Apology.

person who has thrown up his preferment and office in the church, and himself into want and dependence, as the test of the conviction that he has been in error in having been a minister and member of the church, and that he has gone over to, what he thinks, a better and a sounder faith; and he has since taken great pains to show that the Christian world lies in error and darkness, and that he is a voluntary martyr to the light of truth.

Att. Gen. But how does this martyrdom and this apology show the truth of his new belief?

Witness. To my mind they neither of them prove it. Submission to distress in preference to a dishonest concession to an opinion, proves indeed the sincerity of the sufferer, but not the soundness of the opinion for which he suffers. It may prove, as I think in this case it does, the weakness of his understanding, rather than the strength of his cause. I fear, that too easy credit may be yielded to a doctrine held forth by the claimant to martyrdom. The seal of blood has given an apparent validity to many a position from which the assertors had previously derived no glory. The stake, where it has been the only argument, has sometimes been considered as a very convincing one; and a departure in flames has been thought to have revealed the angel, where the precepts for which they are sus-

tained has, perhaps, only shown forth the contemptible man.[1]

Court. Have you, sir, dedicated much of your time to the study of theology?

Witness. No, my Lord, and any one who has read my confutation of the Defendant's arguments will soon perceive that I am altogether unread in theological disputations.

Court. May I ask, then, what led you to take up the subject?

Witness. A great noise was excited by the Defendant's surrender of his preferment, and still greater on the consequent publication of his "Apology." Drawn by curiosity to look into this book, I found, to my surprise, the design of it was not barely to offer a vindication of the motives, conduct, and sentiments of a private person; but to assail every fundamental doctrine of the Church, to degrade the God of our salvation, to snatch from us the object of our religion, and to evince that Jesus Christ is not one with the Father and the Holy Ghost. With perfect freedom from prejudice, nay, I am almost ashamed to confess, with the first serious consideration of so important a point, I sat down to read the Defendant's book; and for the truth of every position contained in it I appealed to the word of God itself, that I might

[1] Scriptural Confutation, p. 5.

learn how truly that word was advanced; when, to my utter astonishment, I soon found, that this was the only book upon the subject which the Apologist had not critically read; and that, in every particular, it directly opposed itself to him and to his frequent quotations. Convinced, however, that the Bible was the only guide to be depended upon, I thought that reading it with attention would be a sufficient preparative for writing; that my very ignorance in controversy would turn to account; and that it might be considered as a corroborating proof of the truth of what I should write; and that the Bible alone would be found sufficient for my purpose: and, consequently, the Bible alone have I consulted, without a single prejudice either of my own, or borrowed from any other person.[1]

Court. Very well, sir.

Att. Gen. How does the Defendant impugn the doctrine of the Trinity?

Witness. By declaring that the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity is as new as the title given to it, and that both name and title are unscriptural.[2]

Att. Gen. What do you say to this?

Witness. I deny it altogether; for the *name* of a sacred doctrine not being found in Scripture is no proof against the doctrine itself being a true one. We speak of God's *omniscience*, his *omni-*

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[1] Scriptural Confutation, p. 221.

[2] Apology, p. 12.

potence, and his *omnipresence;* and though such words are not found in the Scriptures, yet no one can deny that they are the attributes of God, and that the Scriptures declare such attributes to belong to him. In the same manner, if we show, as assuredly we can, that the attributes, the titles, and the inherent power of the Supreme Being are severally and clearly ascribed to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, any word or name which will include and express all this may be used to designate what is thus found to be a Scripture doctrine.

"The Rose, by any other name, will smell as sweet."

Att. Gen. Well, sir; but tell us what is the general opinion of the Defendant, not merely in respect to the doctrine of the Trinity, but of the other mysterious doctrines and parts of Scripture?

Witness. He lays it down as an undeniable position that "Our Saviour Christ taught no mysterious doctrine;" and he treats with contempt every thing connected with the term mystery.[1]

Att. Gen. How do you answer this?

Witness. By stating the difference between the *precepts* and the *doctrines* of Scripture: the former, as being clear and intelligible to all; but the latter, many of them mysterious, and are so declared to be by the Apostles themselves. St. Paul, speaking of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and him crucified,

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[1] Apology, p. 16.

declares it not to be given or delivered "with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit; that our faith might stand, not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God;"— and he further adds, "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery," and this, "by the Spirit of God, by which alone the deep things of God are searched."— "The Spirit compares spiritual things with spiritual, which things are foolishness to the natural man, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."[1]— But clear as this seems to be, the Apostle is even more explicit, where, speaking of Christ, he says, "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."[2]— Is not this a mystery? Is not the Trinity declared to be a mysterious doctrine by St. Paul himself; for he says, "Without controversy great is the *mystery* of Godliness. God was made manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."[3]— Here is the mysterious doctrine of the divinity and incarnation of Christ, circumstantially discovered; the whole doctrine is here literally epitomised, and the Father and Son are clearly declared to be the same God.[4]

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[1] 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. 7. and 15. [2] Col. ii. 9.

[3] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

[4] St. Paul speaks of another *mystery*, and a great one, when

Att. Gen. Does the Defendant speak of the doctrine as derived from Plato?

Witness. He does, and he goes so far as to say, that it is *acknowledged* to be entirely of heathen extraction, borrowed from Plato and the Platonic philosophy; and this being its true origin, it should seem that a proper zeal for God's word, and regard for Christ and his inspired Apostles, should make us relax a little of our passion and vehemence against those who scruple to use a language not sanctified by their authority, in speaking of, and addressing the great God.[1]

Att. Gen. And do you admit this to be the "true origin" of the Trinity?

Witness. Decidedly not. To deduce the doctrine from the Platonic philosophy is as absurd as to suppose the doctrine of the Unity of the Godhead is derived from Socrates, because, though educated in a country where the unity of the Deity was esteemed impious, that philosopher dared to preach this imagination of his own brain.[2]

Att. Gen. What does the Defendant say of the nature of Christ?

Witness. He would fain get rid of the testimony

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he alludes to the union of Christ with his church, in the same manner that man and wife, though *two*, are made *one* flesh.—Eph. iv. 32.

[1] Apol. p. 13. [2] Script. Confut. p. 8.

of the Fathers and all other early Christian writers, by saying; "Authorities of men are nothing: it is Holy Scripture alone which can decide the point, and to which we must make our final appeal. But if the matter is to be put to the vote as it were, it is absolutely necessary that the less learned should be told, what upon enquiry will be found to be undeniably true, namely, that the Fathers of the three first centuries, and consequently, all Christian people, for upwards of three hundred years after Christ till the Council of Nice, were generally Unitarians, what is now called either Arian or Socinian, *i. e.*, such as held our Saviour Christ to derive life and being, and all his powers, from God, though with different sentiments concerning the date of his original dignity and nature."[1]

Att. Gen. What do you affirm or deny in this declaration?

Court. You hardly want more evidence upon that point.

Witness. I do not profess to know much of the sentiments, the opinions, or even the works, of the early Christian writers; I confine myself simply to the Scriptures themselves.

Att. Gen. Are there any passages involving any particular doctrine of Scripture on which this De-

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[1] Apology, p. 23.

fendant has commented, bearing upon the point at issue, — I mean, the Trinity?

Witness. There are many, but the principal one is that which contains the command of Christ that his disciples should "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." "This form of baptism," says this Defendant, "which is made to contain a mystery, is only a compendious summary of the Gospel which Jesus had taught them, and into which all men were to be initiated and instructed: that religion which he received from God the Father, which he, the Son, had preached, and which was to be confirmed and propagated by the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit: and, from what Jesus had taught, no other construction can be put upon this baptismal commission."[1] Now, this explanation, I do not hesitate to say, is the most absurd that ever was committed to paper. Dust is here thrown into the eyes, which not only pains the sight, but renders objects distorted; for the same sacred names into which Christians are commanded by their Lord to be baptized, are the very same by which the Apostles blessed their hearers; and it cannot be imagined possible for the people to do otherwise than equally believe in those, in whose names they are both *baptized* and *blessed.* They

[1] Apology, p. 104.

must believe that those who are called upon to bestow graces and blessings upon them, are able to give what they are thus taught to call upon them for. And whatever is meant by *baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, it clearly seems that these three are equally concerned in what is done in that sacrament. Whether in this form of baptism be signified, on the minister's part, the *authority* or *commission* by which he acts in his administration; or whether, on the part of the person baptized, be meant any *acknowledgment* or *confession, submission* or *dedication* of himself; or whether this phrase "*in the name*" (or, according to the Greek, *into the name*) implies all this and more; the whole force and importance of the expression belongs, in the same extent, to *Father, Son,* and *Holy Ghost.* The *power* and *authority* here received is derived from all three: they are all to be acknowledged as *Authors of our Salvation;* all *infallible,* and to be believed in what they teach; have all the same title to our *submission* and *obedience;* and are joint parties in the Covenant which we make in baptism. The inference from all this is very plain and easy; — that if *any one* of these terms signify *God,* they must all three signify *God,* and if all three signify God, they must all three signify *one and the same God;* for *God* is but *one.* Now that the *One supreme God,* the Lord and Maker of all things, is here meant by the word

Father, is a thing not questioned, and therefore *Son* and *Holy Ghost* are terms expressive of the same *Divine Nature:* for, let us for a moment suppose the direct contrary, that by *Son* was meant only a *mere man*, or some heavenly being of highest rank under God; and by *Holy Ghost* was signified some *created spirit*, inferior to the *Son*, or that it meant only the *power*, the *love*, or the *favour* of God, how strange would such a form of baptism then appear, as this: — *I baptize thee in the name of God, Peter the Apostle, and the Love of God!* or this: — *I baptize thee in the name of God, Michael the Archangel, and Raphael, a ministering spirit!* The bare mention of such an exposition is sufficient to show the absurdity and falsehood of it.[1]

Att. Gen. Does the Defendant deny Christ to be a proper object of worship?

Witness. He does; for he says, our Saviour Christ, in words as express as can be used, forbids men offering prayer unto himself: — "In that day *ye shall ask me nothing:* verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye *shall ask the Father in my name*, he will give it you."[2] Hitherto he had been all along present with his disciples, as it were, in *God's stead*.[3] And he adds, "As Christ was now

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[1] Bishop Gastrell's Considerations on the Trinity. — Enchiridion Theol., vol. iii. p. 118.

[2] Apology, p. 121.

[3] Ibid.

going to be withdrawn from them, he acquaints them that, when that event took place, they were no more to apply to him for any thing, but to the Father (the Father of him and of them all) *in his name.*

Att. Gen. What is the inference which you yourself draw from these words of the Saviour?

Witness. That, in their plain and obvious meaning, they lead to the very opposite conclusion to that drawn by the Defendant. Christ distinctly said, "If ye ask any thing in my name, *I will* do it."[1] — "I go unto my Father; and whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that *will I do*, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."[2] — But as a still stronger confirmation of my assertion that Christ is the proper object of worship, I will cite the passage from the Acts of the Apostles, which incontrovertibly proves it: — "They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.'"[3] Here was present to the martyr's sight, as he "looked up stedfastly into heaven," both the glory of God, and "Jesus standing on the right hand of God;" that is, the holy Shechinah, which the Jews knew to be the symbol of

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[1] John, xiv. 14.
[2] John, xiv. 13.
[3] Acts, vii. 59, 60.

Jehovah's presence, and also Jesus: and we find that, in the tortures of a cruel death, St. Stephen does not call upon, does not invoke God, but the Lord Jesus, into whose hands he commended his departing spirit. He could not thus have invoked him, had Jesus been a creature even in this highest state of exaltation. That same Christ had said to Satan, "It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him *only* shalt thou serve."[1] — "Worship God," said the angel to St. John[2]; but our Saviour did not say so to Stephen, nor did he refer him to that God whose glory was before his eyes; and therefore I am justified in concluding that it was God, and God only, whom Stephen worshipped in the person of Jesus Christ.[3]

Att. Gen. What does the Defendant affirm respecting the Holy Ghost, the Comforter?

Witness. He says, "The promise of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles has been much mistaken; and the mistake concerning it has, unhappily, contributed to bring into the Christian Church a *new object of worship*, a third Divine Person, *unknown to the Jews entirely, and to Christians for the three first centuries;* but our Lord speaks of the Spirit as a person only, in the same manner as *wisdom* (Prov. viii.) and *charity* (1 Cor. xiii.) have

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[1] Luke, iv. 8.
[2] Rev. xxii. 9.
[3] See Script. Confut. p. 82.

personal acts attributed to them:" and he adds: "In the New Testament, where we have an account of the fulfilment of this promise of Christ, and of the particular mission of the Holy Spirit, we do not find any intelligent agent or person introduced."[1]

Att. Gen. How do you answer this?

Witness. Our Saviour, when about to leave the world, gave his disciples the promise that they should not be left either comfortless, or left alone. He promises them the Paraclete, the Comforter, that is, the Holy Ghost. "I will pray the Father," he says, "and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth." Then he shows that this Comforter will be *himself:* — "*I* will not leave you comfortless, *I will come to you.*" "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am *I* in the midst of them."[2] Then he proceeds to show that the Comforter is both *himself* and *God:* — "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and WE *will come unto him, and make* OUR *abode with him.*"[3] Here the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, are (or is) the Comforter; the witness to the Truth, which shall come and abide, or make abode, with

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[1] Sequel to Apology, p. 180.
[2] Matt. xviii. 20.
[3] John, xiv. 17, 18.

him who loveth the Son, and keepeth his word. The identity of the Godhead, of the Holy Spirit with that of the Father and of the Son, is here expressly declared. And I would caution all men to beware how they reject or blaspheme the Comforter, by denying his personality with the Father and the Son in the Godhead; remembering, that "all sins shall be forgiven to the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness."[1] Moreover, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name,"[2] is a title which evidently cannot, with any degree of propriety, apply to a human or corporeal teacher; but it is also as evident, on the face of the assertion, and according to its literal tenour, that not only a spiritual effect or influence, but an intelligent and personal agent, is intended, by whom those graces were to be dispensed which should entitle him to the name of Comforter. And there are many passages of Scripture in which the person thus designated is adorned with the most striking and tremendous attributes of the Deity. He is spoken of as omnipresent: — "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?" — as all-knowing, "The

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[1] Mark, iii. 29.

[2] John, xiv. 26. See Script. Confut. p. 209.

Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God:" — to lie to him is to lie to God: — "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God;" — to blaspheme him is a crime the most awful in its guilt and consequences of which human nature is capable; and the inspiration of the prophets, which is, in some passages of Scripture, imputed to the Holy Ghost, is, in others, ascribed to the Almighty. "The Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice;" — and, "All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God." [1]

Att. Gen. How does the Defendant, in his writings, evade the manifest and multifarious proofs of the divinity of Christ with which the Gospel of John abounds?

Witness. He says, that "this Evangelist does not describe Christ in any other capacity but as a man extraordinarily commissioned and empowered by God, nor does he intimate any prior existence belonging to him before his birth of Mary." [2] Now, our Saviour says of the Father, "Thou lovedst me *before* the foundation of the world;" [3] and to the Jews, "Ye are from beneath: I am from above." [4] "What if ye shall see the Son of Man *ascend* up where he was *before*," [5] to

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[1] Bishop Heber's Personality and Office of the Comforter, p. 36.

[2] Sequel to Apology, p. 196.

[3] John xvii. 24.

[4] John viii. 23.

[5] John vi. 62.

be glorified "with the glory which I had with the Father *before the world was?*" [1] If this testimony of our Saviour, which he thus bears to himself, be true, and if the testimony, borne by the Holy Ghost, to which he refers enquirers into his nature, be credible, and if these testimonies unite with that of David [2], in declaring Jesus Christ to be God from everlasting, I see not how a doubt can be entertained either of his divinity or his equality with the Father; but if his having appeared clothed with flesh among men, as a man; if his sympathetic tears; if his apprehensive agonies and prayers to have the cup of evil put away from him; if his having fallen under the severest afflictions, and even having suffered an ignominious death, added to his own testimony and that of the Holy Ghost, be admitted as evidence that he was man, I see not how a doubt can be entertained that he was man inferior to God, as we are inferior to him; and if these both be admitted, it must necessarily follow that Jesus Christ is both God and man: But if both God and man, I do not see the force of the objection to his Godhead, that he has acted and suffered as man, particularly as he was, what

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[1] John xvii. 5.

[2] "Thy throne is established of old, thou art from everlasting;" this and other parts of the ninety-third Psalm are universally acknowledged, and even by the Jews themselves, to relate to Christ, the Messiah, the Eternal King.

man never was and God ever is, —*free from sin.* It is no objection to his Godhead, that he refers the preservation of his human nature to the power which is alone equal to preserve it, — that he prays, as a man, in behalf of the world with which he sympathises, — that he declares his human nature and the man Jesus to be a messenger to man, and acting with power derived from God. For as I believe that men, who made a difficulty of believing any union between *two natures* being possible, will hardly insist upon their own capacity to explain the manner of it, or to show that, upon such a union, so much of the divinity is derived to the manhood of Christ, as to render it independent of God, and able to act for its own purposes without further application than the exertion of this derived power; so I will not admit of their explanations of our Saviour's prayers and declarations that he was sent: for these prayers were breathed by the man Jesus; and this commission to die for and to adopt a world, was given to the human nature by God, and not to the divine nature of Christ, which was itself the power, one with the Father, God Almighty, which had so sent forth this "man without sin" to atone for us. I am far from saying, that I am myself able to explain this union; God forbid: but that I am not able to explore the ways of an Almighty God, whose mere creature I am, is not a reason why I should doubt his word, when

he is pleased to reveal any part of his ways to me. We are told that "the ways of God are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts;" and that "he is past finding out." Shall we then question the wisdom which we cannot comprehend, merely because we cannot understand it? Were the Almighty pleased to open the stores of his wisdom to our eyes, but not to open our eyes with more extended faculties for looking at them than we now enjoy, is it to be conceived that we could comprehend them? I therefore readily grant the Defendant that Jesus Christ formally professes his inferiority and dependence, and that he received his human being and his powers from God; but what can he infer more than I have already done, that, as man, the Man Jesus was inferior to God; that is, having two natures, one was greater, and, consequently, the other was less? Were I, in the midst of an argument proving the immortality of the soul of man, to say, that I laboured under a lingering disease, of which I feared that I should die, would the Defendant say, I had confuted my own doctrine of the soul's immortality? Would he pronounce that I meant that my soul should die? Upon this reasoning, he may equally, as in the case before us, declare, that when Jesus Christ speaks as man, he denies his Godhead.[1]

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[1] See Scriptural Confutation, p. 25. 27.

Court. Now, then, Defendants, if any of you be disposed to question this witness, you may proceed.

Lindsey. In reply to what this witness has advanced, I have first to state, my Lord, that to the doctrine called the Trinity I object, as not being revealed by Scripture; and if it were one of such vital importance as the Attorney-General and the several Witnesses represent it, it seems only reasonable to expect that what constitutes the leading point of Christianity should be clearly and unequivocally defined. If it were, indeed, required as an article of Christian belief, Christians of the dullest faculties, in all justice, should be possessed of sufficient ability to comprehend it. That the doctrine is mysterious, all who hear any thing of it must admit; but my words respecting mysteries have been wantonly misunderstood: my own expression and my own belief is, that "our Saviour Christ teaches no mysterious doctrine." And I beg to ask the witness, whether what he has declared as the doctrines of Christ are not the doctrines of the Apostles; and of the Apostles I have not said that they taught no mysteries.

Witness. What I have before stated, at all events, refers to the belief of the Apostles, who declared many of the doctrines of Christianity mysterious; and particularly that which relates to the divinity of Christ; and upon this ground alone your arguments fall: but I moreover maintain, that the

deep and mysterious doctrine of the incarnation, and previous divinity of Christ is insisted upon by our Saviour himself; for, as I have already mentioned, he declares that God "loved him before the foundation of the world;" — that "he had a glory with the Father before the world was;" — that he spake "what he had seen with the Father, whom no man had seen but himself alone;" — that "he came down from heaven to do the will of him that sent him;" — that "he came forth from the Father, and came into the world, and was to leave the world, and go to the Father;" — that "he should be seen ascending up where he was before." — And because the Jews cavilled when he observed, that Abraham saw his day with joy, he adds, "Before Abraham was, I AM." It is true that he calls himself a man; but this no more excludes his divine nature, than the application of that term to angels excludes their angelic nature.[1]

Lindsey. Again, my Lord, with respect to the term *Trinity*, it is one which none have a right to assume as the designation of a doctrine of Christianity, when the doctrine itself is, at best, but

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[1] This paragraph is taken from Archbishop Newcome's observations on the conduct of our Lord, sect. ii. p. 6.; and shows what was that Prelate's belief respecting the divinity of Christ; although the editors of "the Improved Version" conspicuously place his name in their titlepage, as if he were a favourer of a very different doctrine.

questionable; and I beg to ask the witness whether Luther or Calvin did not both of them condemn the term? and with them I agree in considering it barbarous, insipid, and profane; a human invention, grounded on no testimony of God.[1]

Witness. I answer, that Luther and Calvin should prefer addressing prayer to God Almighty, in the name and through the merits of Christ in preference to the Trinity, by no means impugns their belief in the doctrine itself. Were they not, I ask, both of them believers, and strenuous assertors of this article of belief? However Luther might prefer praying to God, rather than to the Trinity, it is quite clear that he looked upon the words as synonymous; and did not Calvin demonstrate the sincerity and earnestness of the same belief, by that horrible proof which he gave in bringing Servetus to the stake for opposing it?[2]

Lindsey. With respect, also, to the argument of the witness grounded on the form of baptism, I

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[1] Apol. p. 18. The word *Trinity* was first used for mere convenience, to avoid the repetition of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*. It does not imply that the three persons are divine; it only implies that, in Scripture, they are so frequently mentioned together as to make it desirable to have a collective name for them. In the same manner, the word *Triumvirate* was used to avoid the repetition of *Pompey*, *Cæsar*, and *Crassus*, or of *Octavius*, *Anthony*, and *Lepidus*. — Hey's Lect. vol. ii. p. 226. and 259.

[2] Script. Confut. p. 11.

take the liberty to ask him, whether the Apostles baptized in any other name than simply that of Christ? Peter says, "Be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ;" — or when Philip baptized the great officer of the queen of Ethiopia, the confession of faith which he made, and with which Philip was satisfied, was, "I believe that Jesus Christ is The Son of God." [1] — Now, directly contrary to this, the Nicene Council pronounces that baptism to be nugatory which is not performed in the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.[2]

Witness. Hold, hold! To be baptized in the name of *Christ* was most essential to be observed then, that the rite might be distinguished from the baptism of *John* the forerunner. And it is the generally received opinion, that these instances of baptism in the name of Christ only, has no meaning beyond that of a baptism *into the faith and religion of Jesus Christ*, — that is, a baptism into the Christian covenant: and considering the fact, how unanimous most, if not all, the early Christian writers (not excepting Cyprian himself) have been in denying that the Apostles ever baptized in any different form from what our Lord prescribed, it is concluded, that the Apostles baptized all, Jews and Gentiles, in "the name of the Father,

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[1] Acts, viii. 37.

[2] Apology, p. 105.

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." But even granting that baptism was thus administered in the name of Christ only, (which, however, I deny); yet whatever it was, it was assuredly sanctioned by our Lord, and has nothing to do with that form and mode of administering the sacrament, expressly commanded to be adopted by his disciples after his ascent into heaven, when, whatever he might have ordered before, he commissioned them to "go into all nations, and to baptize every creature, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." You admit however that when the Ethiopian officer was baptized, Philip was satisfied with the confession of faith which he made, by declaring his belief that Jesus Christ was The Son of God. And a noble confession it was. Had he believed Christ to have been the Son of *a* God, or *a* Son of *a* God, or to be a mere "child of God," in the common acceptation of this term, this confession would have applied to Philip himself, or to any other good man. No: far from all this, the Ethiopian convert was taught by Philip to confess and believe that Christ was THE Son of God, in that high and divine sense which Christ assumed, and which his Apostles acknowledged it to import, —in that high sense which Peter felt when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" which our Saviour declared to be, not the acknowledge-

ment of flesh and blood, but the revelation of the great God of heaven; an acknowledgement which was the very Rock on which the Church of Christ is built, and against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.

Lindsey. I still hold to this point, that because the name of Christ and the name of the Holy Spirit are added to that of the Father in this form of baptism, they no more include or infer an equality with God, than what Paul said to Timothy, "I charge thee, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things," implied an equality of divinity, from the circumstances of the Angels and Christ being named together with God.[1]

Witness. Calling, as St. Paul thus did, upon a minister to the strict discharge of his duty by reminding him of the heavenly witnesses of his actions, or by reminding him of that great day of account when the testimony of these witnesses would be adduced against him, is a matter totally distinct from that of the present question; and, I repeat it, that if by *Son* was meant a mere man higher than an Angel, and by *Holy Ghost* was signified any created being inferior to the Son, that the form of baptism might as reasonably run in the name of the Father, in the name of Michael

[1] Apology, p. 107.

the archangel, and of Philip the deacon; in short, that it would be a most palpable absurdity.

Lindsey. It is useless to carry this point further: but with respect to what I have written against your assumed position, that Christ in Scripture is made the object of divine worship, I repeat it, that it is hardly possible for you, or for any one, by any subterfuge or device, to evade or set aside the force of our Saviour's own example and express precept of offering prayer to the one God and heavenly Father. I therefore call upon the witness to deny, by argument and fact, that it is the sheer invention of man, and not the declaration of Holy Writ, to make the word *Father* signify both, what he calls, the first person of the Trinity, and the divine nature or essence containing the whole Trinity. And I would further ask, when Christ prays, or commands us to pray, to the Father, whether it is to be understood of supplication to the whole Trinity? If so, the device is not only a weak one, but it involves a long chain of contradictions; for the Apostles prayed, and directed others to pray to God, and to God only.[1]

Witness. I readily grant you that Christ, *as man*, prayed to the Father, and *as man* he suffered, and he commanded others to pray to the Father in his name; but it is equally true that he said,

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[1] Apology, p. 124.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, *that will I do;*" "If ye ask any thing in my name, *I* will do it."[1] The term *Father*, as the sole object of prayer, though it excludes only other gods, does not exclude the *Son*, because he is the same God. The Father and the Son, though distinct *persons* in the divine *nature*, are not separate, divided, persons; and therefore, in a qualified sense, the Son is the very *self* of the Father, another self, another same; distinct, and yet not different, one with the Father, and undivided from him. The Father is regarded as being first of the Unity, the head and fountain of all, because he is the first in our conception of God; when, therefore, we speak of the *Almighty God*, or the *eternal God*, the *all-knowing God*, we primarily and principally mean the *Father*, tacitly including the other persons of the divine nature. In strictness of speech, *one God* is the whole *Trinity*, but we are compelled to speak in such terms as the customary use of language supplies.[2] I have, however, shown that Christ taught that prayer should be made unto him, and that he would not only be present in the assemblies when making supplication, that is, by the Holy Ghost, but that what was asked faithfully in his name, *he would do it.* St. Paul addresses one of his epistles

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[1] John, xiv. 13, 14.

[2] See Waterland on the Divine Unity, vol. ii. p. 82.

to "all that, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, both theirs and ours:" that is, "whom we and all true Christians join in acknowledging and adoring, as their Lord and ours."[1] Ananias, speaking of Saul, says, "And here he hath authority to bind all that call on thy name:"— that is, "all who publicly avow the worship of Christ;"[2]— and afterwards, again, we read, "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is The Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them who *called on this name?*" that is, evidently, they who called on the name of Christ. And does not St. Paul expressly say, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved?"[3] A text which furnishes us with a double argument in favour of our Lord's divinity, for the Lord Jesus Christ is, without doubt, the only one here mentioned.[4] "But," continues the Apostle, "how shall they *call on him*, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Consequently, Christ is declared, by the Scriptures, the object of invocation, a principal part of religious adoration; and the man who desires to be *saved* must "call upon him" by prayer.

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[1] Doddridge in loc.
[2] Acts, ix. 14. See Hammond in loc.
[3] Rom. x. 13, 14.
[4] Whitby in loc.

Lindsey. But permit me to say to this, that the phrase of "calling upon the name of Christ," is to be taken passively, as denoting those who were named by the name of Christ, or who were called "Christians."

Witness. But this cannot be. The name *Christian* was not known in the world till some time after St. Paul's conversion, when, as St. Luke expressly informs us, "the disciples were called 'Christians' first at Antioch:" whereas, before that time, they were distinguished by the title of "those who called on the name of Christ." (ἐπικαλούμενοι τὸ ὄνομα Χριστοῦ.) St. Paul says, "the same Lord is rich to all who *call upon him*," "for whosoever shall *call on* the name shall be saved." And Paul himself, upon his conversion, was commanded "to wash away his sins, *calling on the name* of the Lord."[1] "And here," says Origen, "the apostle declares *Him* to be God, whose name was called upon."[2]

Lindsey. With respect to the case of the proto-martyr St. Stephen, I think the words of his prayer, or rather the 59th verse of Acts vii., may well bear this signification, viz. "Stephen called upon God, saying, *Lord of Jesus, receive my spirit;*

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[1] Acts, xxii. 16.

[2] Origen, Com. in Rom. x. lib. 8. See Bishop Horne's discourse upon "Christ adored."

for the use of the Greek word (ἐπικαλέω) in the Old and New Testament with "*Lord*" or "*God*," is so common, that either may be easily understood and safely supplied.[1]

Witness. I wholly protest against this alteration: any scholar will show you that the strict critical sense is otherwise.[2] We find the same word and expression used in Genesis: — "Then began men to *call upon* the name of the Lord;" — "Abram built an altar at Bethel, and there *called upon* the name of the Lord."[3]

Lindsey. Whether St. Stephen, at the sight of his master Christ at God's right hand, called to him, as he would have done had he seen him working miracles here on earth, to help and assist him; or whether St. Stephen, according to his Master's rule and example, called upon God, *the God and Father of Jesus Christ*, is not very material to be determined either way: —

Witness. Of no consequence at all; for neither suppositions are true.

Lindsey. Be that, I say, as it may. The translators of the common version ought to have been more impartial; and instead of rendering the passage in question, "They stoned Stephen, calling

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[1] Sequel to Apology, p. 59. [2] Vide Schleusner in verb.
[3] Compare 1 Pet. i. 17. 1 Cor. i. 2. 2 Tim. ii. 22.; also Genesis iv. 26. and xii. 8.

upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" it had been fairer and truer to have done it thus: — "They stoned Stephen, calling (to Jesus, whom he saw at God's right hand) and saying, O Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."[1]

Witness. Every scholar knows that "calling upon God," used in this instance, is the rendering of the Greek word of which we have been speaking, and which I have shown to signify *invoking*. At all events, the matter resolves itself into what I have stated in my evidence; and the question still arises, — Why did the martyr invoke *Jesus*, and not *God*, on whose right hand he stood?

Lindsey. This vision might give a sudden turn to his thoughts, and cause him to call out to Christ, and not upon God, as his disciples once did in a storm; for they, and Stephen too, well knew his power with God, and well they knew their own duty was to call upon God for help in extremity; but being persuaded, like Martha, "that whatever Christ should ask of God, God would grant it him," upon their seeing Christ, or being with him, they might readily apply to him, whom they knew to be in such favour with *God:* yet,[2] —

Witness. My Lord, there is no end to the suppositions which may be made by those determined

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[1] Sequel to Apology, p. 61.

[2] Ibid.

upon making an escape from what they are resolved not to believe.

Court. Defendant, you do your cause no good by these subterfuges. You have admitted that St. Stephen at all events *said* the words, "O Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" and there stop.

Lindsey. Permit me, then, my Lord, to add, that St. Stephen, when he surrendered his life and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," meant, "Lord Jesus, receive my *life*, which I give up in thy cause;" *after* which he betakes himself properly to address, not Jesus, but God, copying the example of Jesus when expiring by a violent and unjust death: and "he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." [1]

Court. The distorted meaning which you endeavour to put upon the words by which Stephen commends his soul to Christ, as Christ commended his to God, cannot be admitted; besides, the last part of the prayer is addressed to the same being as the first.

Lindsey. Be it so, my Lord; still I will contend that, as this invocation was made by the martyr looking upon Jesus, it offers no precedent for making prayer to him now that he is invisible. He

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[1] Sequel to Apology, p. 61.

was then *Son of Man;* consider, *Son of Man, and God Most High! — what a space between!* [1]

Witness. Do you conceive the actions of an Almighty God to be limited to your comprehension, and that the space beyond your faculties cannot be passed? I will take you at your own word, — "The authorities of men are nothing; it is Holy Scripture alone which can decide the important point, and to that we must make our final appeal:" and from these Scriptures I find that God has put his own nature into union with that of man; and I will believe this, though neither any of the Defendants nor I, know, nor can know, anything of the matter. Now, whether the vision of God and of Jesus at his right hand were all the time, (both in the council and out of the city where Stephen was stoned,) before the martyr's eyes or not, still the glory of God and the Son of Man had appeared, and Stephen passed down from God Most High, through that immense space, to the Son of Man, conducted by the Holy Ghost, sent to "guide him into all truth," to supplicate Jesus; seeing, as he did, that the Lord Jesus, into whose hands he commended his spirit, was the same Almighty God to whom David, by the guidance of the same Spirit, had said, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me,

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[1] Apology, p. 129.

O Lord God of truth!" [1] — Now, according to the Defendants' argument, Christ was worshipped when he was present; but he cannot be so when he is invisible.[2] How can this be, if Jesus Christ, even in his highest state of exaltation, be but a fellow-creature? If the command be, and if it is the duty of a Christian, to worship God *only*, I own myself too blind to discern how the visibility of any creature should supersede the commandment, and alter the unchangeable law, of God. The angel was visible to St. John,[3] yet he was restrained from worshipping him, which was not done by Christ to his adorer. It is evident, then, that Stephen worshipped God, and God only, in the person of Jesus Christ, one with the Father, God. The word "*God*," acknowledged by the translators of our common version, shows how they understood the passage before us; and though I do not choose to make use of human authority, I cannot avoid here publicly declaring that I consider this conclusion, drawn by men of great abilities, and employed in the most diligent perusal of the whole Bible, as more than a balance to every assertion made by the Defendants in the

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[1] Psalm xxxi. 5.

[2] The editors of the Improved Version virtually say the same, for they adduce this argument of Lindsey's, in a note, to explain the text of Acts, vii. 59.

[3] Rev. xxii. 9.

establishment of their system, by wresting half sentences to their own particular ends and purposes. Christ and God, the Father and the Son, are one God; "a God at hand, and not a God afar off."

Court. Well, well: — you need not proceed any farther in this strain. The jury and myself are now in full possession of the sentiments of the Defendants on the subject of the worship to be paid, or not to be offered to Christ. Defendants, you must proceed to some other topic springing from the evidence which this witness has given, if you have more on which to question him.

Lindsey. Then, my Lord, I go on to say, that the witness has not disproved my assertion with respect to what Trinitarians have affirmed of the personality and office of the Comforter, or Holy Ghost; for I repeat it, that as a divine person, he was unknown as such both by the Jews entirely, and by the Christians of the three first centuries.

Witness. It does not quite come into my province to answer these questions: there are others who are present much better qualified than myself to explain them.

Att. Gen. My Lord, will the Court permit me to recall Horsley and Burton upon these points?

Court. Stop. — Lindsey, the witness has said that on these subjects he does not feel himself qualified to speak. I do not know if it be of much

consequence to have the questions answered which you have put; but if you think it necessary, I will call others to do this. Consider, therefore, whether you judge it desirable for your defence.

Lindsey. I candidly say that it will make for our cause, if we can show that what I assert cannot be denied.

Court. But then it will make more against you, if they should prove the contrary.

Lindsey. I do not fear it, my Lord; and to show the Court that we are candid enquirers after truth, I beg to say, that I desire they may be called.

Court. Then call Horsley. — Horsley, the Defendant states that the Jews were entirely ignorant of the personality and office of the Paraclete, or the Comforter; they deny that the Holy Spirit is any other than a figurative personification of the power by which ancient prophets had been inspired to do miracles and to deliver the oracles of God.[1]

Horsley. Christ himself promised his disciples, that "when he should leave them to return to the Father, he would send them another Comforter, to abide with them for ever, even the Spirit of Truth, who should lead them into all truth;" give them just views of that scheme of mercy which they were to publish to the world; a right understanding of the ancient prophecies; a discernment of their

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[1] Sequel to Apology, p. 181.

true completion in the person of Christ, and the establishment of his religion; bring all things to their remembrance which Christ had told them, and supply them, without previous study or meditation of their own, with a ready and commanding eloquence, when they should be called to make the apology of the Christian faith before kings and rulers. But this Comforter, he told them, could not come before his own departure; and this was agreeable to ancient prophecy. David, in the sixty-eighth Psalm, predicting, according to St. Paul's interpretation of the passage, these miraculous gifts of the Spirit, speaks of them as subsequent to the Messiah's ascension, — "Thou hast ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men." What these gifts should be, is declared in the conclusion of the verse, — "*that the Lord God may dwell among them.*" This dwelling of God must signify more than God's residence in the Jewish sanctuary; for, whatever might have been in the mind of the prophet, the prophetic spirit looked forward to later times. It cannot signify the *Son*'s dwelling among men when he came to preach the doctrine of life, and to pay the forfeit of their crimes, because it is described as *subsequent* to his ascension. It can signify, therefore, no other dwelling of God than the *residence of the Holy Spirit* in the Christian church. I must not pass over this passage of the Psalmist without

remarking, that the original word, which is rendered *Lord*, — "that the *Lord* may dwell among them," is JAH, one of the proper names of God, of the same etymology and import with the name JEHOVAH, of which, indeed, some have thought it only an abbreviation. Here, then, you have an instance of a name of the same kind equally proper to the Deity, applied to the Holy Ghost, provided I am right in the application of this clause to him. It may be further observed, that the prophet Jeremiah calls the Holy Spirit "the finger of God, by which," he says, "God's law is put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts;" "inscribed," as St. Paul explains it, "not with ink, but *by the Spirit of the living God;* not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart." [2]

Court. Now, sir, state whether it be the fact that the Holy Ghost, or Spirit, was unknown to the Christians of the three first centuries, as a person.

Horsley. This question I can fully and satisfactorily answer from the works of Dr. Waterland. He says that Justin Martyr thus repels the charge of being an Atheist: — "We confess, indeed, that, in respect of such *reputed* gods, we are Atheists;

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[1] Horsley's sermon upon "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," &c.

[2] Jerem. xxxi. 33. 2 Cor. iii. 3.

but not in respect of the most true God, untainted with evil, the Father of righteousness and soberness, and of other virtues: *Him*, and his *Son* that came from him, and the *Prophetic Spirit*, we worship and adore, honouring them in spirit (*reason*) and in truth." [1] — Athenagoras repels the same charge, "Who would not be astonished to hear us called *Atheists*, who acknowledge the *Father* as God, and the *Son*, God, and the *Holy Ghost*, asserting their union of power (or *power* of *union*) and distinction of order." [2] — Clemens of Alexandria gives us a kind of short *baptismal* creed, as it seems, in these words, "ONE Father of the whole universe, and ONE WORD of the whole universe, and the Holy Ghost ONE, the same every where." [3] — And to assure us that he looked upon all three as *one God*, he further says, "Let us give thanks to the only Father and Son, Son and Father, to the Son our Teacher and Master, together with the Holy Ghost, one *in all respects*; in whom are all

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[1] Πνεῦμά τε τὸ προφητικὸν σεβόμεθα, καὶ προσκυνοῦμεν, λόγῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ τιμῶντες. — Apol. i. c. 6. p. 11.

[2] Τίς οὖν οὐκ ἂν ἀπορήσαι, λέγοντας Θεὸν Πατέρα, καὶ Υἱὸν Θεὸν, καὶ Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον, δεικνύντας αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ ἑνώσει δύναμιν, καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ τάξει διαίρεσιν, ἀκούσας ἀθέους καλουμένους. — Legat. c. 10. p. 40.

[3] Εἷς μὲν ὁ τῶν ὅλων Πατήρ· εἷς δὲ καὶ ὁ τῶν ὅλων Λόγος· καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον ἓν, καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πανταχοῦ. p. 123.

things,—to whom be glory both now and for ever."[1] Tertullian tells us plainly and concisely, that the "*Father is God*, and the *Son*, *God*, and the *Holy Ghost*, *God;* and *every one singly God*, and all *together make one God*."[2] And he adds, that this doctrine is, in a manner, the prime article of the Gospel, the very *sum* and *substance* of Christianity.[3] Hippolytus says, THE WORD of the Father gave his disciples orders after his resurrection, to this purpose, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;"—signifying, that whosoever should leave out any one of the three, would fall short of honouring God perfectly; for by this *Trinity*, the Father is honoured.[4]—Origen speaks of baptism to the same effect: "It is, by virtue of the invocations there made, the spring and fountain of spiritual graces, to every one that dedicates himself to the *Divinity* (or *Godhead*) of the *adorable Trinity*.[5]—And next I

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[1] —σὺν καὶ τῷ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι· πάντα τῷ ἑνί· ἐν ᾧ τὰ πάντα. —Pæd. l. iii. p. 311.

[2] Pater Deus, et Filius Deus, et Spiritus Sanctus Deus, et Deus unusquisque.—Cont. Prax. c. 13.

[3] Pater et Filius et Spiritus tres crediti unum Deum sistunt. c. 31.

[4] Διὰ γὰρ Τριάδος ταύτης Πατὴρ δοξάζεται.—Contr. Noët. c. 14. p. 16.

[5] Τῷ ἐμπερέχοντι ἑαυτὸν τῇ θειότητι τῆς δυναμέως τῶν τῆς προσκυνητῆς Τριάδος ἐπικλησέών ἐστιν ἡ χαρισμάτων θείων ἀρχὴ καὶ πηγή.—Com. in Joan. p. 124.

subjoin that remarkable passage of Cyprian (who wrote A. D. 250.). Arguing for the invalidity of heretical baptisms, he asks, how any person so baptized can be supposed to obtain remission of sins, and become the *Temple of God?* For, says he, "Of what God (*of which of the divine persons*) is he made the temple? Is it of (*God*) the Creator? He cannot be so without believing in him. Is it of Christ? Impossible that any should be his *Temple* who *denies Christ to be God.* Is it then of the Holy Ghost? But since those *three are one*, how is it possible that he should be at peace with the *Holy Ghost*, while he is at enmity either with the *Father* or the *Son?*" [1] — And, lastly, I adduce Dionysius of Rome, who sums up the Christian doctrine in these words: — "The divine *Logos* must of necessity be united to the God of the universe; and the *Holy Ghost* must abide and dwell in God; and the *divine Trinity* must of necessity be conceived to be gathered together and collected, as it were, into *one head*, namely, into the God of

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[1] Si baptizari quis apud hæreticos potuit; utique et remissam peccatorum consequi potuit. Si peccatorum remissam consecutus est, et sanctificatus est, et templum Dei factus est; quæro cujus Dei? Si *Creatoris*, non potuit qui in eum non credidit; si *Christi*, nec hujus fieri potest templum, qui *negat Deum Christum:* si *Spiritus Sancti;* cum *tres unum sint*, quomodo Spiritus Sanctus placatus esse ei potest, qui aut Patris, aut Filii inimicus est? — Ad Jub. Ep. 73. p. 203.

the universe, the Almighty." [1] — While Dionysius of Alexandria expresses the same thing in these few words, — " We extend the *Unity* without dividing it into a *Trinity;* and again, we contract the *Trinity* without taking from it the *Unity;*" [2] — which passage might be rendered still more concise thus: — The undivided *Monad* we extend to a *Triad;* and again, the undiminished *Triad* we collect into a *Monad.*[3] Here, then, I have clearly proved that the Christians of the three first centuries not only knew and acknowledged the Holy Ghost as one of the Godhead having a personality and office; but I have at the same time shown that the form of baptism given by our Saviour was a dedication of the baptized into the names of three *divine* persons, or into the names of three persons, each of which is God.

Court. That is sufficient.

Belsham. My Lord, may I be permited to put one question more to this witness?

Court. You may.

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[1] Ἤδη καὶ τὴν θείαν Τριάδα εἰς ἕνα, ὥσπερ εἰς κορυφήν τινα, τὸν Θεὸν τῶν ὅλων τὸν παντοκράτορα λέγω. — Apud Athan. i. p. 231.

[2] Ἡμεῖς εἰς τὴ τὴν Τριάδα τὴν Μονάδα πλατύνομεν ἀδιαίρετον, καὶ τὴν Τριάδα πάλιν ἀμείωτον εἰς τὴν Μονάδα συγκεφαλαιούμεθα. — Apud Athan. vol. i. p. 255.

[3] Waterland's Seventh Sermon on Christ's Divinity, vol. ii. p. 187.

Belsham. Then, as the Attorney-General seems purposely to have avoided asking the witnesses for an explanation of that remarkable passage of St. Mark, in which that Evangelist says that our Saviour, when asked by his disciples when the general judgment should come, replied, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the Angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father." Now, Mr. Lindsey claims this as a proof that the Father and Son are not equal, for it is clear that he was ignorant of some things;[1] to which declaration we also subscribe, alleging, with him, that at least Christ is not God, because his knowledge is limited.[2] I, therefore, call upon this witness to refute this argument if he can; because, as I feel convinced he logically cannot, it will go far to prove that we are the soundest Christians.

Att. Gen. I beg to say I had not overlooked nor avoided this; for I know it to be the stronghold of the Defendants, and as in every battle the defeated enemy, before he yields, throws himself into the place which offers the greatest security, so I conceive the position is taken by the Defendant as his ultimate resource; and, with per-

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[1] Sequel to Apology, p. 173.

[2] Improved Version, Mark, xiii. 32. note.

mission of the Court, I request the witness to answer the point.

Horsley. This difficulty I meet by quoting the able solution of it given by an eminent scholar and deep theologian. Here, then, are the two passages from the Evangelists: — "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, not the Angels in heaven, but my Father only:" so says St. Matthew[1]; but St. Mark is supposed to go farther than this: — "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the Angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son*, but the Father." These texts prove nothing at all against the perfect knowledge, or strict *omniscience*, of the *divine nature* of Christ. It is not said, *the Son of God* knew not the day of judgment; but, the *Son*, that is (as it appears in the context in both Evangelists[2]) *the Son of Man.* And it is well observed by Athanasius, that when our Lord says, — "knoweth no man, not the Angels, neither the Son," — he does not, after the Angels, add, *neither the Holy Ghost;* because, if the *Holy Ghost* knew the day, well also might *God the Son* know it; and, therefore, what is here said of the *Son*, relates to the *Son of Man* only.

Belsham. In truth and sincerity it cannot be said of Christ that he was *ignorant* of the day, if

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[1] Matt. xxiv. 36.

[2] See Mark, xiii. 26. 34. and Matt. xxiv. 37. 39.

he knew it in *any* capacity. If, as you contend, he knew it as *Son of God*, he knew it also as *Son of Man:* in the same manner, you cannot deny that man is *immortal*, so long as he is *immortal* in any respect or capacity.

Horsley. I beg your pardon. You may say truly of the *body* of man, that it is *not immortal*, though the *soul* be *immortal;* and in the same manner and with equal truth, you may say that *the Son of Man* is not omniscient, though *the Son of God* knew every thing. And as Christ may speak of himself either as *Son of God* or as *Son of Man*, it is not inconsistent with truth and sincerity for him to deny that he knew, what he really did know in one capacity, while he was *ignorant* of it in another. Our Lord says, in one place, "Now I am no more in the world,"[1] — and in another place, "Ye have the poor always with you; but me, you have *not always;*"[2] — denying that he was, or should be, any longer present with his disciples: which can only be understood of his human nature and bodily presence; for in another respect, he elsewhere says, "Lo! I am with you *alway;*" — and, "If any man love me, . . . my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our *abode* with him."[3] — From hence we see that our Blessed

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[1] John, xvii. 2. [2] Matt. xxvi. 2.
[3] Matt. xxviii. 20. and John, xiv. 23.

Lord might, without any breach of sincerity, *deny* that of himself considered in one capacity, which he could not have denied in another. He *denies* the knowledge of the day of judgment only in respect of his *human nature;* in which respect, also, he is said to have "increased in wisdom," [1] the divine Logos having, with the *human* nature, assumed the *ignorance* and other *infirmities* belonging to *that* nature.

Belsham. But observe the order preserved by the Evangelists in both places, in mentioning first, Man, then the Angels, then the Son, and then the Father; and this gradation requires us to understand the *Son* as *superior to the Angels.*

Horsley. I answer to this, that the union of the *Son of Man* with the *Logos*, and the particular concern the *Son of Man* has in the last judgment, when "He shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him," are sufficient to account for the supposed climax or gradation.

Belsham. But not only the *Son of Man*, but the *Son of God*, and every other person whatever, is excluded from the knowledge of the time of the judgment, by the words, "*but* the Father," or, "excepting the Father *only*."

Horsley. The exclusive term *only* is not to be so interpreted as to exclude what *essentially* be-

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[1] Luke, ii. 52.

longs to the *Father*, and may be reckoned to him, as included in him, his WORD, or SPIRIT. It is said of God the *Son*, that he had a name written, which *no one* (οὐδεὶς) knew, *but he himself.*" [1] Can you infer from hence that the *Father* was *ignorant* of that *name?* No: neither is it just nor reasonable to infer from this place of St. Matthew that the *Son* was ignorant of the day of judgment. [2] To preclude the curiosity of men, and to engage their vigilance, Christ is pleased to tell them, that no dispensation of God, either by man (as Daniel), or by Angel, or, which is the highest, by the Son of Man, had ordered us to know the times and the seasons; it being no part of the prophetic office, or within the commission of Christ himself, *as Messiah*, to reveal this secret to us. [3]

Belsham. I can neither admit your conclusion, nor that the judgment spoken of refers to any other than that about to fall upon Jerusalem and the Jewish nation. I hold that Christ was not omniscient, for he knew not the season when his own prophecy, this judgment, should be fulfilled; and though it is said "he knew all things," it is

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[1] Rev. xix. 12.

[2] Waterland's Seventh Sermon on Christ's Divinity, vol. ii. p. 163.

[3] Hammond on Mark, xiii. 32.

evident that the words are to be taken in a very restricted sense.[1] But I have done.

Att. Gen. This, my Lord, is my case.

Court. Defendants, the time is now come when you are at liberty to enter upon your defence.

After some consultation among themselves, it was signified to the Court that Mr. Belsham would enter upon the defence on the part of all of them. He then began by saying: —

Gentlemen of the Jury, — I am called upon to stand forth in defence of a body of Religionists, who are actuated by as sincere and conscientious motives as impel the minds and direct the conduct of any Christian people upon earth, — by motives sanctioned by that reason which heaven has implanted in our souls as the surest and safest guide to truth. Gentlemen, a charge is made against us, and is supported by all the arbitrary power of which the law-officer of the Crown has been possessed from the dark and bigoted ages of our history to the present time; — a charge by which the Unitarians are branded with the name of libellers, and, by implication, blasphemers of that Religion which our understandings convince us is preserved pure and unadulterated in the system

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[1] John, xxi. 17. Belsham's Calm Inquiry, p. 185.

which we profess to maintain. We are unappalled by any consequences which can befall us from that vindictive persecution which men, blind to truth, deaf to the voice of reason, and averse to enquiry, are ever ready to press against us; nor are we to be turned from the line of our course by the contumely so lavishly bestowed upon us by that body of narrow-minded, and, I might add, irrational theologians, who, versed in the jargon and encumbered with the lumber of scholastic lore, would impose upon us the traditions of superstition, rather than the doctrines of a simple and a sound philosophy. Liberal principles in religion, as well as in politics, are now happily gaining ground, and trampling upon that abject spirit of weakness and folly which would bridle men's minds, and chain them down to darkness; and though the demon of bigotry is ever ready to sound his bloody trumpet, and to call forth a host of adversaries, yet, the amended liberality and temper of the times is such, that no enlightened Jury of this free and happy country will give their sanction to the official advocate of the Crown to fetter the public exertions in its struggle for that perfect toleration, which leaves every man to follow the dictates of his conscience in the concerns of religion. The learned Advocate has taken infinite pains to establish, and to notify as a fact, that Unitarians are not Christians, and that they ought

to be classed with Atheists, Deists, Heathens, and Mahommedans, with whom he very charitably joins them. He urges this with the very laudable and Christian purpose of making it known that we are within the reach of the law; so that, if any pious and orthodox believer, like himself, wishes to glorify God and to gratify his own exuberant and holy zeal by the sufferings of us pestilent heretics, he may do it effectually in a circuitous, though not in a direct route; for though we cannot be ruined, outlawed, or imprisoned for life in a dungeon, as Anti-trinitarians; yet, the denial of the Trinity being the denial of Christianity, we are still liable to the same penalties as are in force against the class of Deists and Infidels.[1]

It seems hardly possible to conceive that the advocate for the Crown, in these enlightened days, would display his bigotry by filing an information against any individuals upon such grounds as these; yet so it is, and he does this act in a manner highly offensive, by asserting, that as the Scripture doctrines are founded upon divine authority, we both impugn the divine authority of the Scriptures, and deny the Christian Religion to be true; and, consequently, in either case we come within the offence recited by the statute. But though the learned Attorney-General may have

[1] Reply to the Bishop of St. David's, p. 59.

been raised by his Sovereign to guard the prerogatives of the Crown, and to bring to punishment those who offend against the spiritual and temporal interests of the State; who, let me ask, has intrusted him with the keys of heaven? and how does he make good the authority, which he claims, of excluding his *Unitarian brethren* from the Church of Christ, of which they, equally with himself, profess (and, they trust, not without reason) to be members? It is in vain that he and others allege the doctrine of the Trinity to be the sum of Christian faith, and that we, who deny that doctrine to be true, deny the Christian Religion to be true also, and that the law of the land supports him in this conclusion. He well knows, or ought to know, that the question, "Who is a member of the Church of Christ?" is not to be decided by the law of the land, nor by any system of articles of belief, which any *fallible* Protestant, or any *infallible* Catholic Church, may think fit to insert in its list of fundamentals. He well knows that the Unitarians, professing, and truly professing, to admit the Scriptures as the rule of their faith and practice, maintain that no such doctrine is to be found in the New Testament, from one end to the other: nor will we be convinced of the contrary by all the witnesses arrayed here before us this day to support the irrational position that three omnipresent nonentities make one omnipresent Being,

any more than that we will guide our faith by curious and far-fetched criticisms on Hebrew idioms and Greek particles.

The Attorney-General calls the Unitarians unbelievers: the Unitarians, in return, denounce the doctrine of the Attorney-General, and of his witnesses, as anti-Christian. If they believe our tenets to be contrary to the Gospel of Christ and his Apostles, we also believe the same of theirs. If we are to be charged as libellers, in publicly declaring our sense of their doctrine, how can they escape the same imputation for declaring their judgment of our doctrine? If the learned Advocate acts under an imperative sense of duty in warning the public against important errors, we, also defend our conduct upon the same ground. If he pleads that he is justified in supporting such a cause, because he is certainly right, and we are certainly wrong, we call upon him to show the patent of his infallibility with the seal of his office, before we will, with submission, acknowledge our error. Till then, we will rely, in our worst persecutions, upon the honesty and tolerating spirit of an enlightened Jury of our countrymen; and trust that they, upon a calm and scientific enquiry into our pretensions, will show the public that ours is the primitive faith, and that the learned Attorney-General labours under an accumulation of error, when he calculates upon the sanction of

twelve impartial jurymen to punish and torture any subjects of this free country for their religious opinions and sentiments.[1]

We wish to have our principles and belief clearly stated and understood. While we discard many of the doctrines of the Established Church as *enormously* erroneous, we, nevertheless, regard the sincere believers and adherents to it, as worthy members of a Christian community, because this Church professes to receive Christ as its teacher and master, and it believes nothing but what it imagines, however erroneously, Jesus to have taught. The Church looks upon our doctrine as dangerous to the souls of men; and under that impression, it warns mankind against it as a fatal error. We, on the other hand, regard the doctrine of the Church as erroneous, unscriptural, irrational, contradictory, filling the mind with perplexity and distress, and leading to spiritual pride, bigotry, censoriousness, and persecution. But though we conceive these errors so pernicious, we do not regard them as damnable; and we believe that in many instances their evil tendency is counteracted by better principles. The Church is built upon a right foundation, and is, so far, safe; but upon this foundation is reared an edifice of wood, and hay, and stubble, which in the day of trial will be

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[1] See the Reply to the Bishop of St. Davids, p. 67.

consumed, though the mistaken architect will escape destruction.[1]

To point out all these errors and misconceptions would be impossible, nor, happily, is it necessary, I hope, for me to dwell upon even the most palpable of them, after the scrutiny to which so many of them were exposed in our cross-examination of the witnesses. There are, however, some few points to which I must revert, before I enter into that explanation of our tenets which it is our wish should be detailed this day. First, then, with respect to Jesus Christ: — If he who appeared in the form of a man, with all the incidents of frail human nature had, in truth, been very and eternal God, when this fact was first revealed to his disciples, how must their minds have been absorbed and overwhelmed with astonishment and terror! At Lystra, when the people inferred, from the miracles of the Apostles, "that the gods were come down in the likeness of men," the whole city was in an uproar. Every one was filled with amazement; and priests and people assembled together, to worship and to offer sacrifices to the celestial visitants. All this is natural and probable, and exactly what might be expected upon an occasion so extraordinary. What then must have been the feelings and conduct of the Jews, educated as they had been in such exalted

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[1] Reply, p. 68.

ideas of the great Supreme, when a discovery so new, so unexpected, so remote from all conceptions and ideas, so amazing, so overwhelming, was made known to them, that the person whom they conceived to be the son of Joseph and Mary, — with whom they had conversed for months and years with the greatest familiarity, — whom many of them had witnessed as having passed through the various stages of human life, from helpless infancy to vigorous manhood, was, — what? No other than the *eternal* and *almighty God*, the *infinite* JEHOVAH, the *Creator* of heaven and earth! How would they feel, how would they act, when this surprising and alarming discovery was made? Would they associate and converse with him familiarly, as before? Would they reason with him, would they rebuke him, would they desert him, would they deny him? Let any one consider with himself what his own feelings would be after such an awful disclosure; and then look into the New Testament, consult the evangelical history, and see what was the conduct of the disciples of Jesus in the circumstances supposed. They discover no surprise, they abate nothing of their freedom of familiarity; from the beginning to the end of his ministry, their behaviour is uniform; they talk to him as a companion, they love him as a friend, they revere him as a master, they bow to him as a prophet of the Most High;

but nothing is said, nothing is done, which indicates the least suspicion, that he was in reality any thing more than he was in appearance, much less that he was the eternal JEHOVAH himself.

It has been said that this important and astonishing fact was not revealed to the disciples till after the resurrection of Jesus from the grave, until the day of Pentecost. — Let us suppose it to have been so. In this case, however, they must have understood his language, — "I came down from heaven;" — "Before Abraham was, I am;" — "The Father and I are one" — "Glorify me, O Father, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was;" — expressions which have here been adduced as asserting the pre-existence and divinity of Christ: yet these made no particular impression upon the Apostles, nor any change in their conduct to their master; a plain proof that they understood his language in a very different sense from that which modern Christians now put upon it. Would, moreover, the Apostle Peter, immediately upon this grand discovery, when addressing the assembled crowd, impressed and agitated as his mind must have been with the novelty, the magnitude, and the importance of the doctrine, — would he have spoken to this tremendous Being, this "very God of very God," under no higher character than that of a *man* approved by God by signs and wonders, and who was now exalted to God's right hand?

How deeply are the minds of Trinitarians penetrated with a sense of the grandeur, sublimity, and importance, of their favourite doctrine! How seldom, how slightly, do they think and speak of Jesus as a man, in comparison with the frequency and earnestness with which they think and speak of him as God! But how much more deeply must the minds of the primitive disciples have been impressed with the stupendous discovery! It must have seized and kept possession of every faculty of their souls. In the present age the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the Deity, and of an incarnate and crucified God, are so common and familiar that they almost cease to shock the mind. But to the primitive believers it must have had all the freshness and the force of novelty; it was an idea which would never be out of their thoughts; it must have occupied and filled the imagination, and must have been the constant topic of their meditation, their conversation, and their correspondence. And in sitting down to write the history of Jesus, his high dignity, his divine nature, his condescension in becoming incarnate, must have been their darling theme, in comparison with which all other topics must have been frivolous and nugatory; and if they were under the necessity of touching upon them for a time, they would constantly recur to that astonishing

fact, which could never be forgotten for a moment, and must have been uppermost in their thoughts.

But how stands the fact? Observe and wonder! Matthew, Mark, and Luke, professing to write a history which should contain all that would be necessary to know and believe concerning their venerated master, absolutely forgot to mention the stupendous fact, that Jesus Christ was the living and true God, and they take no more notice of this awful distinction, than if he were a man like themselves. And one of these sacred historians (Luke) continues his history for thirty years after the ascension of Christ, and relates the travels, the labours, the doctrine, and the success of the Apostles and first teachers of the Gospel; but not a syllable does he mention of the divinity of Christ, or the doctrine of the Trinity, and no one would know or suspect from Luke's history that the Apostles had ever heard of any such doctrine. Is this credible, is it even possible, if the doctrine itself were true? Certainly not. Let every Trinitarian lay his hand upon his heart, and declare upon his honour and in the presence of God, whether he could himself have been guilty of such an unpardonable omission. How then can they believe that the Evangelists would have been so unfaithful to their trust, if they really had it in charge to record, or even if they were apprised of this extraordinary event?

Again, the witnesses affirm that Jesus Christ was the Creator, Preserver, and Governor, of this and of all worlds. This also would be a most novel and astonishing doctrine, especially to Jews, who had never heard of any Creator but God. This then is a doctrine which we might expect to be blazoned in every page of the New Testament. But what is the fact? It is omitted by Matthew, Mark, Luke, James, Peter, and Jude, and by the Apostle Paul in ten out of fourteen epistles. Is it possible, then, that these writers should have given credit to this doctrine? — no, no; the thought of it never entered into their minds, and if it had been proposed, they would have rejected it with horror.

And what, let me ask, is there, with King James's version before us, to rebut these weighty considerations, and to command our assent to these astonishing and most improbable propositions, so contrary to all just conceptions of the Unity of God, so contrary to the most explicit declarations of the Jewish Scriptures, and to the main and avowed object of the Mosaic dispensation, and so inconsistent with the general tenour of the Evangelical and Apostolic writings themselves, viz. that Jesus Christ is the true God, the Creator of all things, equal with the Father, and that the Father, Son, and Spirit, being three distinct persons, are only one Being, one God! The witnesses have,

indeed, referred us to one passage here, and to another there, in which it is said that Jesus Christ is called God, equal to or one with the Father; and to two or three more, in which he is supposed to be represented as the Maker of the world; and to a few other texts, in which it is thought that divine attributes are ascribed to Christ. And when we ask for the texts which prove the Trinity, they refer us to the form of baptism; as if baptizing into the name of a person, of Paul or Moses, for example, was an acknowledgment of their divinity: or, they send us to St. Paul's valediction to the Corinthians that the grace of Christ, — that is, that the blessings of the Gospel, the love of God, and a plentiful participation of spiritual gifts, may be communicated to his Corinthian friends. Upon evidence so feeble and unsatisfactory, rest the amazing doctrines of the divinity of Christ and of the holy Trinity! And these detached texts, being frequently cited by the advocates of these mysterious doctrines, are for that reason believed to be of frequent occurrence in the Scriptures; and, in contradiction to the most notorious fact, though not to their sincere persuasion, they represent the New Testament as full of these mysteries from beginning to end: though it is plain, that not a shadow of them exists in many of the books, and particularly in those in which we should most naturally expect to find them, in the history of

our Lord's ministry, and of the preaching of the Apostles. We conclude, therefore, that these passages, which only occur incidentally, and which pass without comment, in whatever way they are to be accounted for or explained, were not, and could not possibly be, understood or intended by the sacred writers in the sense in which believers in the deity of Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity now understand and explain them; because these doctrines did not make that impression upon their minds, nor produce that visible effect in their teaching and writings which they now do in all who receive them, and which they necessarily must and would have done in the Apostles and Evangelists, and their readers and hearers, if they had believed these doctrines, and if their language had been originally understood in the sense in which they are now received by those who profess the popular creed.

We, who are armed with such considerations as these, — considerations which must find a way to the hearts and bosoms of all who seriously and impartially seek after truth, — we are little affected by the curious disquisitions of learned men upon the niceties of grammatical construction and the force of Greek particles. We will never be persuaded that it can be necessary for us to study the bulky volumes of Hoogveen, or the more moderate subtleties of Middleton, in order to learn the essen-

tial doctrines of the Christian religion, which we naturally and justly expect to find upon the front and surface, and in the general strain and tenour, of the New Testament. Let us admit, for the sake of argument, that the text of St. Paul to Titus is the true and only proper translation of the passage as rendered in the common version: — "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the *great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*" — (ii. 13.) Can we even from such an expression conclude, that the Apostle was an asserter of the *supreme divinity* of his crucified master? Surely not. We argue that, if Paul believed that Jesus Christ was the supreme God, his mind would have been so full of the amazing doctrine, that it must have shone forth in every page of his writings, in every sentence of his discourses. His delight and his duty would have been to insist continually upon this new, unheard of, and astonishing theme, and to have explained the necessity and importance of it in all its bearings in the scheme of redemption. Could the Apostle, under these impressions, have coldly taught the Athenians that "God would judge the world in righteousness by the *man* whom he had ordained, of which he had given assurance to all men in that he had raised him from the dead?" Could he have written to the Corinthians, what, indeed, would hardly be reconcileable to the simplicity of

truth, that "as by *man* came death, by *man* came also the resurrection of the dead?" How then, it may be asked, is this declaration of the Apostle to Titus to be reconciled to his not acknowledging the divinity of Christ? We answer, upon various suppositions. It may have been a slip of the Apostle's tongue in dictating; or a mistake of his amanuensis; or an error of some early transcriber; or, there may be a various reading; or, the words might be intended in a different sense; or, the Apostle might not study perfect correctness of language; or, there might be some other reason, which cannot now be discovered. We will give up the text as altogether inexplicable, sooner than we will believe that the Apostle intended in this casual incidental manner to teach a doctrine so new, so incredible, and of such high importance, and which is so little countenanced by the general strain of his discourses and epistles, and so repugnant to the whole tenour of the Christian Scriptures.[1]

Having thus, by the arguments of reason and consistency, shown the firm and solid basis upon which the goodly edifice of our belief and understanding of Christianity is founded, I proceed to detail the several parts of it, with the view to guard against misconception, and, by these means,

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[1] Reply to the Bishop of St. David's, p. 72—83.

rebut the malicious and persecuting charge of being libellers of that Religion which is only preserved in a pure form, and in genuine force, by our rational system. Our doctrine is this : — We believe that Jesus of Nazareth was a man constituted in all respects like other men; subject to the same infirmities, the same ignorance, prejudices, and frailties; descended from the family of Joseph and Mary, — though some of us still adhere to the popular opinion of the miraculous conception; — that he was born in low circumstances, having no peculiar advantages of education or learning; but that he was a man of exemplary character, and that, in conformity to ancient prophecy, he was chosen and appointed of God to introduce a new moral dispensation into the world, the design of which was to abolish the Jewish economy, and to place believing Gentiles upon an equal ground of privilege and favour with the posterity of Abraham — in other words, he was authorised to reveal to all mankind, without distinction, the great doctrine of a future life, in which men shall be rewarded according to their works.

It does not appear to us that Jesus was at all conscious of the honour and dignity for which he was intended till after his baptism, when the Holy Spirit was communicated to him in a visible symbol, and when he was miraculously announced as

the beloved Son of God, that is, as the great Prophet or Messiah whom the Jews had been taught to expect; after which, in the course of his public ministry, he occasionally spoke of himself as the Son of Man, and the Son of God.

After his baptism, we conceive that he spent some time in the wilderness, where he was fully instructed in the nature of his mission, and invested with voluntary miraculous powers, which, by the visionary scene of his temptation, he was instructed to exercise, not for any personal advantage, but solely for the purposes of his mission. Others of us, however, imagine that Jesus never performed a miracle but when he was prompted to it by a divine impulse. It is maintained by some of us, that, during the period of his residence in the wilderness, Jesus was favoured with divine visions, in which, like the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. xii.), he apprehended himself to be transported into heaven; and that the language which he uses concerning his descent from heaven is to be explained by this hypothesis; but the greater part of us interpret these expressions as relating to his divine commission; to the perfect knowledge with which he was favoured, above all other prophets; to the will of God concerning the moral state of men; and the new dispensation which he was appointed to introduce.

We believe, also, that Jesus, having exercised

his public ministry for the space of a year, and, perhaps, a little more, suffered death publicly upon the cross, not to appease the wrath of God; not as a satisfaction to divine justice; not to exhibit the evil of sin, nor in any sense whatever to make an atonement to God for it, — for this doctrine, in every sense, and according to every explanation, we explode, as irrational, unscriptural, and derogatory from the divine perfections; but as a martyr to the truth, and as a necessary preliminary to his resurrection. And we hold, that it was wisely ordered, to preclude cavils, that his death should be an event of great public notoriety, and that it should be inflicted by his enemies.

We maintain that Jesus was raised to life by the power of God, agreeably to his own predictions, on the third day; and that, by this event, he not only confirmed the truth and divinity of his mission, but exhibited, in his own person, a pattern and a pledge of a resurrection to immortal life; for which reason he is called the first-born of the whole new creation, and the first-begotten from the dead.

We further believe, that, after having given sufficient proofs to his disciples, for forty days, of the truth of his resurrection, he was in a miraculous manner withdrawn from their society; a circumstance which is described as an ascension into heaven: and that in a few days after this event

the Holy Spirit was communicated to his Apostles in a visible symbol on the day of Pentecost, by which they were endued with the gift of speaking various languages which they had never learned, and were furnished with many other gifts and powers, by which they were qualified to propagate the Gospel in the world, and to exhibit a most satisfactory and public proof of the resurrection of their master from the dead.

We maintain that Jesus and his Apostles were supernaturally instructed as far as was necessary for the execution of their commission; that is, for the revelation and proof of the doctrine of eternal life; and that the favour of God extended to the Gentiles equally with the Jews: and that Jesus and his Apostles, and others of the primitive believers, were occasionally inspired to foretell future events. But we believe that supernatural inspiration was limited to those cases alone: and that when Jesus or his Apostles deliver opinions upon subjects unconnected with the object of their mission, such opinions, and their reasonings upon them, are to be received with the same attention and caution with those of other persons in similar circumstances, of similar education, and with similar habits of thinking.

We admit that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and especially the latter, contain authentic records of facts, and of divine interposi-

tions; but we utterly deny the universal inspiration of the writers of those compositions, as a qualification to which indeed they make no pretension, and of which they offer no proof; and the assertion of which tends only to embarrass the evidences of revelation, and to give advantage to its enemies. And we judge of the genuineness, of the meaning, and of the credibility, of these works, exactly in the same way as we judge of any other ancient writing.

We believe that Jesus continued to maintain, occasionally at least, some personal and sensible connection with the church during the apostolic age, which he expressly promised to do (Matt. xxviii. 20.); and in this way we account for the continuance of those miraculous gifts and powers which were exercised in his name while the Apostles lived, and also for occasional personal appearances and interpositions, which have never occurred since; but we believe that he is now withdrawn from all sensible intercourse with this world, though some have conjectured that he may still be actually present in, and attentive to, its concerns.

We believe, also, that Christ is appointed to raise the dead, and to judge the world. With regard to the former, we believe him to be the instrument of his Father's power. With respect to the latter, whether the declarations concerning it are to be understood literally or figuratively —

whether Jesus will be personally invested with some high official character, or whether nothing more is intended than that the final states of men shall be awarded agreeably to the declarations of the Gospel, cannot, we think, at present be ascertained. Probably, as is usual with prophetic language, the event will be very different from what the literal sense of the words would lead us to expect. But whatever be the meaning of the declaration, the part which Jesus will bear in it will, we are confident, be no more than what may be properly allotted to a human being[1]; and in the execution of which his Apostles and Disciples will, it is said, be associated with him.[2]

While we bow to the authority of Jesus as the great prophet of the Most High, and receive with implicit submission whatever appears to us to have the sanction of divine authority, — while we regard the character of Christ as the most complete and the most interesting that was ever exhibited to the world, — while we feel ourselves under an indispensable obligation to obey the precepts of his Gospel, and, after his example, to diffuse to the utmost of our ability the knowledge of truth and the practice of virtue; we disavow all those personal regards to Christ, and direct addresses to him, either of prayer or praise, which properly fall under the definition

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[1] John, v. 27. [2] Matt. xix. 28. 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

of religious worship, as unfounded in reason, unauthorised by Scripture, derogatory from the honour of the Supreme Being, the only proper object of religious homage, and as in a strict and proper sense polytheistical and idolatrous. And in this case, so far from being conscious of any wilful derogation from the honour due to Christ, whom we acknowledge and venerate as our Lord and Master, we are fully persuaded we act in perfect conformity to his authority and example, and in a manner of which he himself would testify the most entire approbation, if he were to appear in person upon earth.

We think it superfluous to produce any arguments to prove that a person, who is repeatedly called a man, — who had every appearance of a human being, — who was born, who grew, who lived, who conversed, who felt, who acted, who suffered, and who died like other men, — who was universally allowed to be a man by all who saw and conversed with him, — and who was addressed and spoken of as a human being by all his contemporaries, whether friends or enemies, was really what he appeared, and affirmed himself to be, truly and properly a man, and nothing more than a man. This is a fact which must be admitted without hesitation, unless the most unequivocal and decisive evidence can be produced to the contrary. And surely a fact so astonishing, and so contrary to experience and

analogy, as the incarnation of a superior spirit is not to be received on the authority of oblique hints, or of obscure, figurative, and ambiguous phraseology, but that it is reasonable to expect that the evidence of such a fact should be clear and decisive in proportion to its antecedent improbability. Now, after the closest examination of the Scriptures, we find no such clear and satisfactory evidence. As to the passages which have been adduced by the several witnesses, in which Jesus represents himself as having descended from heaven, they signify nothing more than the divine original of his doctrine; that where he is represented as the Maker of all things, the new creation only is intended; that is, the new state of things which he was commissioned to introduce into the moral world; and that the creation of natural objects is no where attributed to Christ. And with respect to the title of "God," if it ever be applied to Christ in the New Testament (which we deny), it is only in the sense in which Moses is said to have been a god to Pharaoh, that is, as being invested with a divine commission and a power of working miracles in proof of it. We declare that the same, nay even stronger, expressions are applied to Christians in general, than those from which the deity of Christ is usually inferred. And, lastly, we maintain that the creation and support of the natural world and its inhabitants is uniformly ascribed to God; that there is no evi-

dence whatever, in spite of all that has been said to the contrary, to prove that Christ was personally concerned in any of the former dispensations of God to mankind, either to the patriarchs or to the Jews, but that the contrary is explicitly and repeatedly asserted in the Scriptures.[1]

Upon these grounds we rest our pretensions to be received as members of the great Christian community. And while we faithfully adhere to these doctrines, and the principles of action springing from them, though our misjudging brethren may disown and condemn them, — though many who have a high conceit of their own attainments may despise and revile them, — though Churches, which arrogate to themselves the lofty titles of orthodox and infallible, may excommunicate and anathematise us, and though persecutors and men of a persecuting spirit, may vent their impotent execrations upon us, or visit us with pains and penalties horrible to humanity, none of these things can move us; and from the sentence of these erring and censorious brethren we appeal to Him who knows our integrity, and with humble confidence will we rely upon deliverance from the evils which now beset us, by his power, in the instrumentality of a verdict in our favour. With this hope, as the reward of our sincerity, and this

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[1] Calm Inquiry, p. 447—458.

expectation, as the proof of your liberality, I now end our defence.[1]

The Attorney-General now rose to reply.

Gentlemen of the Jury, — In rising to reply to the defence set up by the Defendants, my first object will be, to direct your attention to that peculiar species of argument which is made use of to repel the charge upon the record, and to show that the Unitarians pretend not only that their tenets are not censurable, but that they are more rational, and more consistent with truth, than a very considerable portion of the Scriptures themselves. We argue that, " all Scripture being given by the inspiration of God," whatever it discloses demands our belief; but the Defendants take another and an opposite course, and say, — " Whatever those Scriptures reveal we will not believe, unless the revelation be approved of by our understanding and the faculties of our reason; nor will we admit that to be Scripture, which is not conformable with our rational conceptions." Hence it is, that vast and most important parts of Holy Writ are wholly set aside; and, under pretence of their being of ' doubtful authority,' or contrary to human conjecture, are reckoned as a dead letter; and all who object to this arbitrary

[1] See Reply to the Bishop of St. David's, p. 63.

excision are marked as bigots, — men devoid of reason, and of illiberal minds and principles; and their motto is, *Stat pro ratione voluntas.* The Sacred Volume thus mangled, and afterwards, in all its essential parts, distorted and disfigured, they call the Scripture: and now mark how they make use of it. "The Attorney-General knows that the Unitarians, professing, and truly professing, to admit the Scriptures as the rule of their faith and practice, maintain that no such doctrine as that of the divinity of Christ, or that of the Trinity, are to be found in the New Testament from one end to the other; and therefore he has no right to disgrace them by classing them with Deists and Infidels." Gentlemen, the time of the Court has been wantonly wasted, if we have not shown you, to satiety, that the Scriptures every where abound with declarations of the divinity of the Son, — that they declare Christ to have claimed that divinity, and that his Apostles duly acknowledged it. "But then," say the Defendants, "your Scriptures are not ours; and if you persist in guiding your faith and practice by yours, we do the same by ours." Be it so: but then, what saith the Law of the land? "I lay no restraint upon the conscience, but I am the conservator of the volume of the canonical Scriptures." Now, the Law knows no other volume of Holy Writ save that which is now before us; the Law protects all the several books composing

this Sacred Volume, which we call the Bible; it acknowledges and it preserves the whole entire, without addition or diminution of its parts; it permits of no arbitrary excisions, to suit persons of every different complexion and character; and, what is more, in discharging the duties of this guardianship, it will not suffer what is therein written to be evil spoken of, much less will it bear with impunity that its sacred doctrines be charged with falsehood. The Deists may come forward, and slash from its sacred pages whatever they conceive to be contrary to reason and to their tenets; and say, in the language of the Defendants, "We admit the Scriptures (thus garbled) to be the rule of our faith and practice; but we maintain, that no doctrines are to be found, nor can the similitude of any such be discovered in the whole volume, which call upon us to believe and act according to your system:" and thus, on the same principle, may any inflict wounds that would engender diseases and death to the souls of men.

Our Scriptures explicitly declare Jesus Christ to be both God and man; God from all eternity, and one with the Father, who assumed our nature that, as man, he might redeem and save us. They tell us this fact, and they tell us no more; but this, our reason convinces us, is sufficient, because we have full assurance that those "Scriptures were given by inspiration of God," and that,

as they treat not even of the nature of man, how his body and his soul are brought into such an union as to form one living rational being, so neither do they disclose any thing of the nature of God, a subject infinitely more incomprehensible; and if they did develop the particulars of either nature, such a discovery in the present constitution of our minds would be useless, because the mental faculties of man are wholly insufficient for the comprehension of these things; and, supposing it were otherwise, and that what was thus revealed were all clear to our comprehension, what room would then be left for the exercise of that faith and piety, to which the Gospel makes so many promises of great reward? Looking, therefore, at the fact as we find it, we receive it with implicit confidence on the faith of God's word: and hence, on subjects of Revelation, we dare not bring our reason to deny what is so much above its province to estimate; because what thus comes from heaven cannot be measured by the limited scale of human comprehension; and because we know, in matters of a spiritual nature revealed by God, the ground of our certainty lies not in the evidence of the things, but in the undoubted veracity of God, who has revealed them. We maintain that we derive our doctrines from the most rational consideration of the true meaning of Scripture, from understanding its words in their most usual sense, — from

catching its general tone and spirit, and from taking a combined and comprehensive view of its several texts, so as to ascertain its true doctrine in the surest manner. The Defendants, on the contrary, derive their doctrine from *their* Scriptures, — Scriptures made *theirs* by forcing words from their acknowledged and obvious meaning; by adopting a most erroneous method of interpretation; by taking single passages without adverting to others bearing on the same point. They say, "We pay no regard to what *your* Scriptures speak on these points, because reason is our guide, and not revelation. Our reason tells us that the supposition of the Deity putting on the earthly form of its vile creatures, may be believed by Heathens, but in our estimation it is absurd: it is contrary to nature, — contrary to the eternal fitness of things, — contrary to reason. *If it were really possible and true, every page of Revelation would be blazoned with the notifications of the astonishing deed;* there the matter would be so clearly and conspicuously shown that he who runs might read, and might know it without stopping to consider it; nor, indeed, was it at all necessary that God should demean his divine nature by putting on the form of a man; for he might equally well save us from sin and error by coming, as he did, in the plain and intelligible character of a great Prophet." But "Who art thou, O man, that arguest against

God?[1] Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" or, why wilt thou save us so? I will ask the Defendants if they be able to say what a spirit is, how it subsists, and how it can pervade at all times every part of the unbounded universe? Can they form the least conception how any Being can exist without a cause? Can they fathom the depths of eternity, and explain how, to the great and unsearchable God, all the past and all the future are but a single point of time? Can they tell us how the Supreme Ruler foreknows all events, without determining their issues? how he exercises a providence, without controlling free agency? Can they explain to us what the soul is? Can they even tell us the nature of those material bodies which surround them; on what their properties depend; how these properties are preserved; by what means they are brought into action? Can they look at the most insignificant insect or plant, and not perceive in its structure and economy wonders which baffle all research, and which they cannot pretend to understand or explain? If, on all these points, they are obliged to confess their ignorance to be most complete, they depart at once from their principle of not

[1] Ἀνταποκρίνεθαι non est simpliciter respondere, sed *carpendi* et refellendi animo. — Vide Luc. xiv. 6. Hardy in loc. Rom. ix. 20.

extending their belief beyond what comes home to their apprehensions. [1]

It is, then, highly presumptuous and arrogant for men, with their finite abilities, to limit the operations of Omnipotence, and to say, "so far shalt thou come, but no farther." It is even worse than this, it is a species of idolatry, to set up a God in the proud temple of the mind, to oppose the God of heaven; to take reason for a guide and a vain philosophy instead of revelation, and an humble disposition to obey it. — "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel the Saviour." [2] *Our* Scriptures, then, I affirm, are the word of God, and they teach us that Christ our Saviour is both God and man. The Unitarians deny him not only to be *their* God, but *ours:* how, then, can they presume to call themselves Christians, when they acknowledge not the God of the Christians? — when they say, Hail! Master, and spit on him? "Deists" is the title nailed over them, let them take down the superscription if they can!

Gentlemen, Under the pretence of liberality, and with an affected spirit of benevolence, the Defendants ask us to compromise our differences, and agree that, though one party may consider the other to be *enormously erroneous* in their religious views and principles, both shall shake hands and

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[1] See D'Oyly's Sermons, p. 216. [2] Is. xlv. 15.

be friends, in no less a matter than that in which God and his blessed Son, and all that relates to heaven and an eternal hereafter, are concerned. They propose to us to extend the right hand of fellowship to those who hold the doctrines of our Church "not to be the doctrines of truth and righteousness; not as consolatory to the heart and healthful to the soul, but as calculated to *fill the mind with perplexity and distress, and to lead to spiritual pride, censoriousness, and persecution.*" They consider our views of Scripture as calculated to excite pride, because they teach us that we have *God* for our Saviour, who, while he kept on the flesh, "was tempted in all things like as we are;" — as calculated to excite censoriousness, because we look upon those as excluded from the number of Christians, who deny the divinity of Christ, and would rob us of our Saviour;—as calculated to excite a persecuting spirit, because we will not allow the Deity to be spoken of with irreverence and contempt. Now, without any disinclination whatever to withhold feelings of kindness, good will, or Christian charity from any, particularly from those who are so sincere and conscientious as we believe the Defendants to be, it is hardly to be expected that we should approach to a nearer intercourse with those who regard our religious sentiments with abhorrence, and who must feel that we entertain a similar disgust for theirs. We, therefore,

must decline their invitation to *friendship*, not for want of liberality of mind, nor for want of every kind feeling towards them, but because we will not run the hazard of imbibing their errors, and of thus endangering our salvation.

Having protested against that interpretation of Scripture which claims a superiority for reason above revelation, I proceed to consider the arguments made use of by the Defendants, that I may show, even upon their principles, that neither do they adhere to the deductions of sound reason, nor to the suggestions of truth in what they bring to oppose us in our belief. "Think," say they, "think into what a state of consternation and alarm the disciples of Jesus would have been thrown, when they were informed that their master, whom they apprehended to be the Son of Joseph and Mary, was no other than the eternal God! the infinite Jehovah! the Creator of the universe! Instead of all this, they talk as familiarly with him as before, they reason with him, they rebuke him, they desert or they deny him, although he had told them that 'He and the Father were one,' and that he 'came down from heaven.' All these expressions, therefore, were never understood by these honest men to signify that he was any thing more than a mere man." — Thus far we agree with them, that the disciples until after the resurrection (indeed, hardly before the day of Pentecost, when the

Holy Spirit fell visibly upon them,) "understood none of these things, and these sayings were hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken;" for they were remarkably dull in apprehending many of the plainer discoveries which their Lord and Master made to them. They understood not how he was to die and rise again on the third day, although he had repeatedly advertised them of it, and they had seen him raise the dead upon three several occasions. They at one moment placed the greatest degree of faith in him, which they withdrew the next. They were, in fact, all ignorance and weakness. When their Lord was captured they deserted him, and all the hopes, which he had so fondly excited in their bosoms, were buried with him in the tomb; and even after the resurrection they were incredulous and fearful; but the moment they are visited by the Holy Spirit from on high their characters instantly change. No longer ignorant, they speak, and they speak eloquently, clearly, and fluently, in various languages. Instead of assembling "in private for fear of the Jews, the doors being shut," and whispering their hopes or alarms in each other's hearing, they declaim openly and aloud. Fearless of every danger, and unawed by the presence of either Scribes or Pharisees, they now removed the veil which concealed the divinity while they looked upon the person of their Master. This change of

character and new doctrine is "*noised abroad*, and the multitude come together and are *confounded*, and *are amazed*, and *marvelled*, saying one to another, Behold! are not these Galileans? hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" Indeed, so great is the amazement of the people, that they for a moment attribute the frenzy of feeling in the Apostles to madness, or to the effects of new wine. And what is it that St. Peter now declares unto the *amazed* multitude? He adds to their *astonishment* by telling them that Jesus of Nazareth, who hitherto appeared among them "as a *man* approved of God," and whom they "had taken and by *wicked* hands crucified and *slain*," (mark the boldness of the expression,) was none other than God, whom "it was not possible for death to hold" or destroy, and against whom death had no power; a circumstance which David in the spirit of prophecy had predicted, when he said that he had "foreseen JEHOVAH," and had thus spoken of *his resurrection*, "that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." And what was the effect which this astonishing discovery of the divinity of Jesus produced upon his hearers? "They were pricked in their hearts" — their hearts now fail them, for they perceive, but perceive too late, that they had crucified and murdered not only Jesus of Nazareth, but him who was indeed "one with the Father;"

and in terror and alarm they cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do!" St. Peter afterwards addressed the dispersed Jews to the same effect, "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty;"—where the power and coming of Christ, of which the Apostle speaks, was not, as the Defendants conceive, either his general coming to judgment upon the world, or his particular coming upon the nation of the Jews; but by his power and coming is meant his powerful appearance in the world, by which he mightily discovered himself to be the Son of God.[1] Before I close this address, I shall adduce another instance of the surprise, consternation, and alarm, which a discovery of Christ's divinity produced among the Scribes, the Pharisees, and others of the Jewish people, who saw, acknowledged, and were perplexed at the proof of it. This transaction, and that which I have already detailed, are both of them recorded by St. Luke; and yet what say the Defendants?—"Matthew, Mark, and Luke, professing to write a history which should contain all that would be necessary, absolutely forget to mention that Jesus Christ was the living and true God, and *take no more notice of this awful distinction than*

[1] Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ, b. ii. c. 9. xiii.

if he were a man like themselves." But supposing the case had been as it is here represented, and that Matthew, Mark, and Luke had made no allusion to the divinity of their Lord; what is to be said of St. John, who wrote almost exclusively upon the subject of the person and office of Christ? I will take upon myself to say, that an able theologian, with this single Gospel alone, might meet and refute every argument brought by the Unitarians to deny the divinity of Christ: for it is impossible to take even any small part of his Gospel in which it is not again and again asserted or implied.[1] Matthew tells, of the miraculous conception of Jesus, that his birth of a virgin was the fulfilment of ancient prophecy, and that his name, EMMANUEL, signified "God with us;" that this blessed Saviour afterwards promised, that *wherever* two or three were gathered together in his name, *He* would be in the midst of them; and when he finally left his disciples for his heavenly kingdom, he said, "Lo! *I* am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Mark tells us that the evil spirits immediately knew and acknowledged his divine power.

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[1] This has been admirably done by Bishop Blomfield in his "Five Lectures on the Gospel of St. John," a work equally characterised, with all others on subjects of theology from his pen, for that peculiar simplicity of expression and style so rare among the learned, yet with all that force so common to this profound scholar and divine.

— " Let us alone: what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, — the Holy One of God." Luke speaks fully of the miraculous conception and the birth of him who was born a Saviour, Christ the LORD;" relates the birth and office of his forerunner, who was appointed to go before the face of the Lord (Jehovah) and to prepare his ways: with a variety of other circumstances bespeaking his divinity. However slight might be the notice of the supernatural incidents accompanying the birth and early years of the Messiah, the virgin mother we are told, regarded all that passed with wonder and amazement; and though, perchance, she did not make known her feelings, yet we are assured that she preserved every thing in her memory, " pondering them in her heart." " Yet," say the Defendants, " Luke, who continues his history for thirty years after the resurrection of Christ, and relates the travels, the doctrines, and the success of the Apostles, *mentions not a syllable of the divinity of Christ, and no one would know or suspect in reading his history, that the Apostles had ever heard of any such doctrine.*"

Luke, however, in the Acts of the Apostles represents them as *praying* to their ascended Lord, to direct them in their choice of one to supply the place of Judas: — he tells, more than once, of the

miraculous circumstances attending St. Paul's conversion, in one narration, he states him to have been expressly *chosen* for the Apostles to the Gentiles, by *Jesus;* and in the other, that he was so *chosen* and for that purpose, by *God;* implying that they were one and the same. He tells us, moreover, that when Paul preached the doctrine of Jesus, and proved the truth of it by the fact of his resurrection, the philosophers and others of Athens accused him of being a "setter forth of *strange Gods.*"

Again, the Defendants allege that three out of the four Evangelists, neither state nor prove Christ to have been the Creator of the world, and that St. Paul only speaks of the matter in four of his epistles. Now, as these Scriptures are, we affirm, the word of God, the single narration of an occurrence or truth has the same weight as if it were related a hundred times; yet we find St. John commencing his Gospel with these words: — "In the beginning was the WORD .... all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made;" — having manifestly his eye fixed upon the same language in the opening chapter of Genesis; so that it is clear that the same unerring Spirit spoke both in Moses and the Evangelist. This declaration, of Christ being the Creator, is corroborated by St. Paul, who says, that "God created all things by Jesus Christ.... whom

He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom, also, He made the worlds .... for by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him; for he is before all things, and by him all things consist:"—so that, like St. Paul, "through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the WORD of God," not as the instrument of the Almighty Father, but as his equal; for, "without Him was not any thing made that was made." These passages are sufficient to convince us of the fact, that the universe and all that is in it was created by the Son of God; but Unitarians will not believe it, because all this is not "blazoned in every page of the New Testament." "No;" say they, "in the face of all you adduce from St. Paul or St. John we *will* not believe the doctrine, *nor will we believe that a thought of it ever entered their minds; and, what is more than all this, we know* the spirit of the holy writers well enough to say, *that had it been proposed to them, they would have rejected it with horror!*" Here the Socinian principle of believing only what can be understood, or what men are willing to receive, is clearly displayed; and this mode of trifling with what we regard as most sacred may be illustrated by a practice much too common, and which, evil as it is, has received the sanction of the De-

fendants. In order to throw an air of absurdity and ridicule upon the doctrine of Christ being both God and man, they speak of him with an ironical usage of our language, so as to involve us in a species of blasphemy, calling him, the "crucified God;" implying that he suffered as God, whereas as Athanasius says, "The Scriptures never speak of Jesus suffering as *God*, but in his human nature; and when they mention the *blood of God*, it is only in reference to the flesh."[1] With equal propriety of expression might these votaries of reason designate the Angels who visited Abraham, or those who rescued Lot from Sodom, as *ethereal men;* or call the mangled body of the martyr Stephen, a *murdered soul.*

The Defendants are so candid as to admit that here and there a few isolated passages have been adduced to show that Christ is represented as equal to God; and a few others, to prove that

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[1] So in Acts, xx. 28. On this point see Hey's Lectures, vol. ii. lib. 4. art. 1. sect. 18. p. 275.

In the same manner Hume speaks of Christ as a *crucified God*, and the Jews as being made *murderers of God;* and Gibbon, after Voltaire, speaks of "Christians having the *same* being as *God* and as *Victim.*" Now, all this is wanton perversion; for it is well known that the *Divine Nature* cannot suffer, and it is equally well known that Christ did not suffer in his divine nature.

It is here quite necessary to bear in mind the reading of St. Luke, Διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου.

divine attributes were ascribed to him: but they add, "These, from being continually quoted, in process of time have been believed to be of very frequent occurrence; whereas *it is a notorious fact, that not a shadow of the mysterious doctrine exists in many of the books where we* (Unitarians) *should expect the most to find it; and where any allusions do occur, they could not possibly be understood by the sacred writers in the sense you believe them:* — it is not probable! it is not natural! it is not reasonable!" To what purpose, then, let me ask, did the sacred penmen write, guided by that Holy Spirit which was "to lead them to *all truth*, and to bring to their remembrance" whatever was necessary to be known or believed of their master? — "That is all very true, for aught we know," say the Defendants; "but we can account for the introduction of these things in a variety of ways: perhaps *the writer did not write himself, but procured an amanuensis;* and, as he dictated to him, these things were *accidental slips of the Apostle's tongue;* perhaps the *amanuensis mistook;* perhaps some very early *transcriber copied incorrectly;* perhaps this may be only *one of various readings;* perhaps *the words might be intended in a very different sense from what they are usually put;* it is possible that the Apostle might have sent off his epistle in such a hurry that *he did not study perfect correctness;* (and this supposes that the Spirit

was in *haste*, and in *error* also.) In short, it is probable that *there were many other reasons, which cannot now be discovered*, why all these mistakes occurred. But if Trinitarians will be so bigoted, so irrational, as to believe these things, we *will give up the texts as altogether inexplicable, sooner than we will believe that the Apostle intended, in this casual incidental manner, to teach a doctrine so new and so incredible, and of such high importance, and which is so little countenanced by the general strain of his discourses and epistles, and so repugnant to the whole tenor of the Christian Scriptures;* and, what is more than this, we will not submit to be bullied by the witnesses, in a matter where our conscience and religion are concerned, into what they and the learned call 'the critical interpretation' of Scripture; for we declare, once for all, that we hold the niceties of grammatical construction, and the force of the Greek particles and Hebrew idioms, in perfect contempt." [1]

Gentlemen, — This is the style of language, and these the expressions, of the defence, made with a view to convince you that the Defendants, in all these particulars, have not libelled the Christian Religion, by denouncing as false the great and saving doctrines of the Scripture; and by frittering away the plain and obvious sense of every

[1] Reply to the Bishop of St. David's, p. 83. and p. 81.

word and expression bearing upon them. Now, why is it that these persons wage war against Hebrew idioms and Greek particles? Is it because the Hebrew idiom designates the Lord our God, JEHOVAH? and that this high name implies a union of persons, and especially when it said, "JEHOVAH our God is one JEHOVAH," and which would be a useless expression in any other sense?"[1] For if we were to say, "the Sovereign our King is one Sovereign," what idea would this convey, but that of absurdity, to suppose any could want to be told a truth which none would or could call in question? But when we see that David, speaking of Christ, calls him *his* Lord, and applies the high name of JEHOVAH to him, — when, as the witness Horsley has powerfully and clearly proved, Christ was the JEHOVAH of the Old Testament, — then we see why the Defendants scout and detest Hebrew idioms. We find, too, in pursuing the same track, that their abhorrence of Greek particles arises from a principle of the same feeling. St. John opens his Gospel, as I have already mentioned,

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[1] This text is urged by the Jews as an unanswerable argument against the doctrine of the Trinity; but they admit that it is extraordinary and perplexing that the name of God should be *thrice* repeated. As to the Christians against whom it is urged, they are almost unanimous that in this very sentence is a plain indication of the Trinity. — Sandford's Connection, p. 328.

after the manner of Moses in opening the history of the creation, with these words: — "In the beginning was the Word (Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος);" which the Defendant Belsham alters thus: — "The Word was in the beginning," — which, however trifling the variation may at first sight appear, is of immense importance. The Greek construction preserves the parallel with the opening of Genesis, and implies, that in the beginning of all things, The Son was in existence: [1] the Defendants' construction is made to imply that The Son was in the beginning of the new (or Christian) dispensation. Now, that Christ should be in existence at the commencement of his own ministry, is an axiom which I think none of you, Gentlemen, will be disposed to question; and if this were all that was meant by the Evangelist, it would be of about as much importance as my telling you that when I commenced this reply, I was alive in your presence. But St. John proceeds to say, "And the Word was God (Καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος)." The Defendant renders this, — "The Word was *a* God." Again, they render υἱὸς Θεοῦ, *a* Son of God, because the article before υἱὸς is omitted; and this they think implies that he is said to be God, not actually, but

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[1] It is still more important to observe here, that these words are rendered in the Jewish Targum, "In the Beginning the WORD JEHOVAH created," &c.

figuratively; and yet they admit that he acknowledged himself The Son of God (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, Luke xxii. 70.), where his having made such an acknowledgment subjected him to the charge of blasphemy. Now, permit me here, Gentlemen, to represent to you, and that without exaggeration, the style and manner which the Defendant has adopted in paraphrasing the verses of St. John to which I here allude; and if you will take up the volume of this "*Improved* Version" of our Scriptures, you will see that the absurdity I am about to show is not my own.

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος. — "In the beginning was the Word." By the beginning I by no means intend the beginning of the creation, or of all things, but merely the beginning of the Gospel dispensation. I do not *specify* this to be my meaning, because I conclude you will perceive it, though I know well enough that I express myself exactly as though I *did* mean it, and that *another* beginning *must* be present to *your* minds, when *the world* was *made* by the *Logos* or *Word* of God: however, I certainly *do not* mean this; I mean to make no sort of allusion to any thing you may happen to know, or have previously heard, of the *Logos* or *Word* of God, by whom the world was made; but I mean merely to give this appellation to *Jesus Christ*, a man like myself, because he was commissioned to reveal the *word* of God (that is in Greek λόγος) to mankind: it is what grammarians and rhetoricians would call a *metonymy;* I do not tell you this in my Gospel, because, notwithstanding any prejudices to the contrary, I think you must know it by *instinct.*

Καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν. — "And the Word was with God," that is, *not* with him really and personally, — but how, do you think? Why, in the way of *retirement* or *private communion*, as might be the case with you, or me, or any other man. Do not fancy he was really *with* God, though I say so; there is something implied under the preposition πρὸς, which I do not stop to explain to you, because I conclude that you, and every convert that comes after you, however unacquainted with the Greek language, *women* and children, will easily comprehend what I mean, by *instinct*.

Καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος. "And the Word was GOD:"—Do not mistake me, I mean *God was the Word;* though, contrary to grammar, depend upon it this is my particular meaning; or, if you do not like this, mind that Θεὸς has in this place *no article* before it; therefore, at the utmost, it can only imply that the *Word* was A GOD, perhaps you will think *Jupiter* or *Mercury:* not so, but yet A GOD; one, in short, of the Jewish *Elohim*, but take special care you do not account it one of the *Elohim* spoken of in Deuteronomy, vi. 4., for, of course *it is impossible* I should mean any such thing, though, indeed, I know that you have been brought up to believe that the Word of God was the *appearing Jehovah*, and, therefore, might reasonably be accounted one of *the Elohim*, which God himself has told us constitutes ONE Jehovah: but had I meant to describe him to be *Jehovah*, you may be sure that I should have put the definite article before Θεὸς, and called ὁ Θεὸς, a distinction which in no manner belongs to him. Though, indeed, I know that St. Matthew has blundered so greatly as to deceive you in this particular, when he tells you that the Messiah was to be GOD WITH US, that is, in *our* language, *Emmanuel;* in the blundering

Greek of St. Matthew, μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός. This may not strike you at first; but, depend upon it, he never meant *Jehovah*, he only meant *a* God in some way or other as *I* do: do not, therefore, on any account, attend to *his* insertion of the article, mind only *my* omission of it.[1]

Gentlemen, — I should scorn to use ridicule as a test of truth, much more so upon such a subject as this, were I not anxious to show how nearly it borders upon an actual absurdity to suppose that a Jewish evangelist could, in those days, have *so* expressed himself, as to be subject to the interpretation which Unitarians *now* put upon his words.

These arbitrary alterations, so much at variance with the rules of legitimate criticism, and which would instantly be rejected by any scholar in the interpretation of a profane classical author, in conjunction with the great and unwarrantable excision of the text, afford to my mind a very strong argument against the truth of the Unitarian system; for it is evident that all this lopping and mangling, all the new readings suggested, all the improbable probabilities hazarded, apply to the Scriptures only in those points where they are conceived to oppose that system; and even the substitution of reason for revelation is used only where the doctrine of the Trinity is in question. If we look around us, we shall invariably find this practice resorted to by

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[1] Nares's Remarks on the Improved Version of the New Testament, p. 100.

all framers of peculiar systems. The Jew denies the truth of the whole of the New Testament, not because he can disprove any part of it, but because it treats of the actions and teachings of a Messiah, such as his nation *will not* receive. His Scriptures, he declares, and we readily admit, to be unquestionably canonical and true. They announce the time when Christ was to come, at which time he did appear, although they affirm that his advent is delayed. Now this denial has no effect upon the rest of the religious world, because it is known and seen to spring from obstinacy of belief and a judicial blindness; and, moreover, in this case, the conduct of the Jews is observed to fulfil their own accepted Scriptures. But the Jew and the Unitarian are the only parties who bring against our Scriptures the charge of untruth, if we except, perhaps, one passage blotted out to form the creed of the Romanist, and which the Jew satisfactorily proves to be both genuine and authentic; I mean, the Second Commandment, the rejection of which is admitted by none professing to believe the Bible but the Romanist; because it is seen that a "fond conceit," and a leading doctrine and practice, of the Romish Church is forbidden by this pretended addition. I must not forget that, with respect to the New Testament, words are falsely rendered, and the sense of some passages is wrested to a peculiar meaning, also, by the Romanists, in order that they

may establish or enforce their particular practices and belief: and thus it is that the Jew, the Unitarian, and the Romanist, alter and *amend*, and regard as spurious or interpolated, only what militates against their own respective, peculiar, systems. Now, of the Holy Volume, as of the chain of universal being, it may be said,

——— "Whatever link you strike,
Tenth, or ten-thousandth part, divides the chain alike."

We have shown, then, this day, by the evidence of witnesses whose testimony is as valuable as sound learning and piety, fair character and calm judgment can make it, that *our* Scriptures divulge the high and mysterious doctrine of a Trinity in Unity; and nothing that the witnesses have adduced in its support has been so much as shaken by all the sifting, shifting, and subterfuge which has been employed to render any part of their evidence doubtful. They prove, and they support their proof by the unanimous sanction of all the Christian world, (for I will maintain that the Defendants exclude themselves from that *religious* community,) that the doctrine of the Trinity, that is, of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, three persons in one divine nature, is the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, the belief of which is required of us all on the faith of the word of God. This doctrine has been admirably *illustrated*

by the witness Leslie, in an example taken from our own nature, where the *understanding*, the *memory*, and the *will*, *three* distinct faculties are seen to constitute the *one* soul of man; that mysterious part of us of which we know no more than that it exists. Where or how it so exists, is altogether hid from us; and as we cannot unravel a plain circumstance thus mysteriously attached to our own earthly, much less can we expect to comprehend what belongs to an infinitely higher, and divine nature, beyond what God has been graciously pleased faintly to trace, and shadow out to us in his revelation.[1] The doctrine, however, is not confined to Christianity, although it is there more clearly manifested than in any of the previous dispensations. There can be no doubt that it was known to the

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[1] "The three persons in the Trinity," says Tertullian, "stand to each other in the relation of the *root*, the *shrub*, and the *fruit*; of the *fountain*, the *river*, and the *cut* from the river; of the *sun*, the *ray*, and the *terminating point of the ray*." For these illustrations he professes himself indebted to the revelations of the Paraclete. In later times, divines have occasionally resorted to similar illustrations, for the purpose of familiarising the doctrine of the Trinity to the mind; nor can any danger arise from the proceeding, so long as we recollect that they are illustrations, and not arguments; that we must not draw conclusions from them, or think that whatever may be truly predicated of the illustration, may be predicated with equal truth of that which it was designed to illustrate. — Bishop Kaye's Eccl. Hist. of Second and Third Centuries, p. 534.

Patriarchs, and that, after the flood, Noah and his descendants preserved so much of the knowledge of what had been vouchsafed to the antediluvian world, that the tradition of it was transferred from age to age, faintly marked indeed, but still sufficient to be traced; until, at length, it was adopted by the philosophers of antiquity, and grafted into their system of a divine Triad: and thus, as Dryden says, "What Socrates said of God, what Plato wrote, and the rest of the heathen philosophers of several nations spoke, is all no more than the *twilight* of revelation, after the sun of it was set in the race of Noah."[1] This knowledge of a Trinity further appears from the accounts given of the cavern of Elephanta, thought to be the most ancient temple of the world,[2] in which is rudely but distinctly carved, in the solid rock, a colossal representation of the Hindoo deity, with *one* body and *three* heads,

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[1] Pref. to Religio Laici.

[2] At the upper end of the principal cave, which is in the form of a cross, and exceedingly resembles the plan of an ancient basilica, is an enormous bust with three faces, reaching from the pavement to the ceiling of the temple. It has generally been supposed, and is so even by Mr. Erskine, a representation of the Trimurti, or Hindoo Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. But more recent discoveries have ascertained that Siva himself, to whose worship and adventures most of the ornaments of the cave refer, is sometimes represented with three faces, so that the temple is evidently one to the popular deity of the modern Hindoos alone.—Bishop Heber's "Narrative of a Journey," vol. iii. p. 81.

adorned with the oldest symbols of Indian theology, and avowed, by the sacerdotal tribe of India, to indicate the *Creator*, the *Preserver*, and the *Regenerator* of mankind. That this may be affirmed to be their triune divinity, seems certain from the testimony of a Sanscreet inscription upon a stone found in a cave near the ancient city of *Gyre* in the East Indies, in which the three persons, *Brahma*, *Veeshnoo*, and *Mahesa*, the *Creator*, the *Preserver*, and the *Destroyer of Evil*, make one great divinity, whose name (AUM) is forbidden to be uttered aloud.[1] A triad of deity may be traced in the

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[1] The inscription is this: —

The Deity who is the Lord, the possessor of all, *appeared* in the ocean of natural beings at the beginning of the *Kalee Yoog* (the age of contention and baseness). He who is omnipresent, and everlastingly to be contemplated, the Supreme Being, the Eternal *One*, the Divinity worthy to be adored, *appeared here with a portion of his divine nature*. Reverence be unto Thee in the form of Bood-dha (author of happiness). Reverence be unto the Lord of the Earth! Reverence be unto Thee, an INCARNATION of the Deity and the Eternal *One*. Reverence be unto Thee, *O God!* in the form of the God of Mercy! the dispeller of pain and trouble; the Lord of all things; the Deity who overcometh the sins of the *Kalee Yoog*; the guardian of the universe; the emblem of mercy towards those who serve thee! O—M (the unutterable title of the Deity)! The possessor of all things in *vital form!* Thou art *Brahma*, *Veeshnoo*, *Mahesa!* Thou art Lord of the universe! Thou art under the form of all things, moveable and immoveable, the possessor of the whole! And thus I adore thee! Reverence be unto the *Bestower of salvation*, and the *Ruler of the faculties*. Reverence be unto

Egyptian and Persian mythology, all emanating from the same source, — the original tradition given to the early race of Adam, and preserved, though gradually fainter and fainter, through the post-diluvian world, until the embers of it, blown upon and excited into flame, broke out in the advent of Christ, the incarnate Deity himself.

In every dispute concerning the apostolicity of any point of Christian discipline or doctrine, it is obviously of the highest importance to ascertain what was the belief or practice of those Christians who lived in the first ages of the Church. They, who, like Hermas, Clement, and Ignatius, were contemporaries with the Apostles, and fellow-labourers with them, could not possibly be ignorant of the doctrines which they taught, or of the discipline which they established in their respective churches; and we may be sure they would religiously hand down to their successors that doctrine and that form of government which they themselves had received from the Apostles. Yet the witnesses having produced a multitude of extracts from the writings of these and other fathers of the primitive Church, to establish the certainty that the belief of the

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Thee, the *Destroyer of the Evil Spirit!* O *Damordara* (Indian God of Virtue) show me favour! I adore Thee who art celebrated by a thousand names, and under various forms, in the shape of *Bood-dha*, the God of mercy! Be propitious, O Most High God! — Asiatic Researches, vol. i. p. 284.

Trinity prevailed in the apostolical and immediately succeeding ages; and although the Defendant Priestley in his writings admits that "it was an unanswerable argument *à priori*, against any particular doctrine being contained in the Scriptures, that it was never understood to be so by those persons for whose immediate use the Scriptures were written, and who must have been much better qualified to understand them, in that respect at least, than we can pretend to be at this day[1];"— notwithstanding this admission, the Defendant, Belsham, to get rid of all such testimony, declares the epistles of Clement to be spurious, treats the writings of Hermas and Barnabas with contempt, charges the epistles of Ignatius and Polycarp as being filled with interpolations, and stamps the Clementine Homilies as a romance: still, in spite of all this, he arrives at this logical and impartial conclusion: —"At any rate, they are good evidence of the existence of Unitarianism in the second century."[2] Then comes the Defendant Lindsey,

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[1] History of Early Opinions, p. 15.

[2] Reply to the Bishop of St. David's, p. 96.

When Dr. Priestley was once pressed by the clear sense of a scriptural text, which was too stubborn to bend to his schemes, he declared that, sooner than admit the received sense, he would suppose the whole verse to be an interpolation, or the amanuensis of the Apostle to have committed an error in taking down his words. — See Quarterly Review, vol. xv. p. 46.

and with one stroke of his pen, he dashes out the testimony of the Fathers altogether. He must have a clear and open space for the manœuvring of his system, and therefore cuts down root and branch to make way for it, and cries out, "*The authorities of men are nothing!*" — an assertion, Gentlemen, which I hardly think he would have made had their testimony been in favour of his views. Now, to reject the evidence of the Fathers in the interpretation of Christian doctrine and belief, would be as absurd as for us to reject the opinions of all contemporary lawyers, and the uniform decision of the judges, if the true meaning of some ancient statute were in dispute. This we should consider to amount to an abandonment of the question. On this account it is that all parties involved in doctrinal controversy are anxious to obtain the support of the early Fathers; justly looking upon them as ancient receptacles of primitive articles of belief, and good expositors of the Christian faith. It must, I believe, be admitted, that these holy men have been treated at one time with a deference bordering upon enthusiasm, at another with a negligence nearly allied to contempt; neither of which, in the judgment of the learned, they deserved, — extremes from both of which, I am led to think, the sober learning of the present day bids fair to emancipate them. And here I must be permitted to remark, with respect to the writings of the early Fathers, that, of such

as remain to us, there is not one hundredth part of those which were extant at the beginning of the fourth century; and yet, with all this quantity of evidence before the Fathers of the council at Nice, and which was open to their opponents as well as to themselves, they did not hesitate to declare that all their predecessors, all the Fathers who had preceded them, believed in the divinity of Christ. Where were the Unitarian teachers when this confident assertion was made? If the writers of the three first centuries believed, as we are repeatedly told, in *the simple humanity of Jesus*, why was not a whisper of this belief heard at the council of Nice?[1] There is not the smallest particle of

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[1] In the year 325, a numerous and celebrated assembly was convened at Nice in Bithynia, to extinguish, by their final sentence, the subtle disputes which had arisen in Egypt on the subject of the Trinity. Three hundred and eighteen bishops obeyed the summons of their indulgent master; the ecclesiastics of every rank, and sect, and denomination, have been computed at two thousand and forty-eight persons; the Greeks appeared in person; and the consent of the Latins was expressed by the legates of the Roman pontiff. The session, which lasted about two months, was frequently honoured by the presence of the Emperor. Leaving his guards at the door, he seated himself (with the permission of the council) on a low stool in the midst of the hall. Constantine listened with patience, and spoke with modesty: and while he influenced the debates, he humbly professed that he was the minister, not the judge, of the successors of the Apostles. — Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. iii. p. 304.

evidence to show that the Unitarian or Socinian doctrines were so much as thought of at that council. It is true, indeed, that those who were inclined to Arianism appealed to the early Fathers in support of their opinions. Marcion, Valentinus, and others of the same school, were so convinced of Jesus Christ being God, that they could not believe him to be man; they held that his body was an illusion: which surely makes it extremely improbable that the majority of Christians in those days believed in the simple humanity of Christ. The same conviction led, in the third century, to the Patripassian and Sabellian heresies.[1] The leaders of these sects could not persuade themselves that Christ was a man; and one taught that he was actually God the Father, the other maintained that he was an emanation from God. I repeat, therefore, that the total absence of all mention of Unitarianism at the Council of Nice is a very strong argument against the notion that the early Fathers were Unitarians. We might believe, perhaps, though

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[1] The *Patripassians* were the disciples of *Praxeas*, of the third century, who held that it was God the Father who suffered in the person of Jesus Christ. The *Sabellians* were so called from *Sabellius*, a bishop of Upper Egypt, who flourished near the fourth century. He was a disciple of *Noëtus*, and taught that the Deity appeared in the Old Dispensation as *the Father*, in the New as *the Son;* and that he descended on the Apostles as the *Holy Ghost:* that is, that he was *one* God with *three names*.

the hypothesis is highly improbable, that the bishops assembled at that council all agreed in drawing up a profession of faith which they knew to be fundamentally opposed to the doctrines held in the three preceding centuries; yet surely they would not have dared to assert, with such a mass of evidence before them, that they were supporting the same doctrine which had always been preached. They would have taken the bolder and more consistent ground of saying, that the Fathers who preceded them had gradually corrupted the purity of the Gospel. But their language is the very opposite to this. They drew up the exposition of their faith in the plainest and strongest terms, explaining every article so as to meet the varied objections and subtile sophistry of conflicting heresies; they were driven to assert the divinity of Christ with more minuteness and precision of language than it had ever been necessary to use before; and yet they declared, that every article of their belief had been held and preached from the days of the Apostles to their own. Nor did any person venture to rise up and contradict them by saying, that the Catholic church for the first three centuries had believed in *the simple humanity of Jesus Christ.*[1] But, Gentlemen, to proceed: — the Defendants, in the exposition of their creed, go all along upon the principle

[1] Vide Burton's Test. of Ante-Nicene Fathers, p. 448.

of their right to receive or to reject such parts and portions of Scripture as the reasoning faculties of men, of men like themselves, approve or disapprove; and hence they conceive that Christ was not only a human being, but a man marked with the same "*ignorance, prejudices, and frailties,*" as characterise every other man: in short, that he was only a very common man gifted with very uncommon endowments. As a proof of this "*ignorance,*" they *conjecture* that "Jesus knew not the honour and dignity for which he was intended, until after his baptism," which, we all know, took place when he was about to enter upon his public ministry. Now, upon the face of the Gospel history, it seems to me that his wisdom was most extraordinary, even at the early period of the twelfth year of his age, when, as we read, he went up with his parents to keep the passover at Jerusalem, and took the opportunity of leaving their company unobserved, and, after a search of three days, was found in the schools of the Rabbins, within the temple, "*His Father's house,*" as he called it, hearing their arguments, and replying to them in a manner "and with an understanding that astonished all who heard him." And what was the language he used in reply to the remonstrances of his mother for having deserted, and caused her and her husband such anxiety? "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about *my Father's* business" — the business of man's salva-

tion? To me, and I think also to you, Gentlemen, these words convey an unquestionable proof that Christ, as man, knew from the earliest time what purpose his coming into the world was to answer, and why it was that he had come "down from heaven to do his Father's will." Again, to say that Christ had human "*prejudices*," is what I think none have shown, and none can prove, unless, indeed, that can be called prejudice, which led him first to prefer his own people and nation, the chosen of God, before others, in offering the terms of his mighty salvation; and to have personally visited them, and not the Gentiles. Unless his consideration of the poor, rather than of the rich, in his pastoral visitations; and his preference of the submissive and teachable disposition of the ignorant, to the self-conceited and opinionated Scribes, and others of the wise, be called prejudice; he assuredly had none. And, with respect to the "*frailties*" to which he is also said to have been subject — if by the expression more be meant than the natural *infirmities* which flesh is heir to, I, on behalf of the Christian world, repel the insinuation with the indignation and scorn which it deserves; for it is impossible to forget that Jesus, the holy Jesus, "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."[1] And it is upon this firm ground, that

[1] 1 Peter, ii. 22.

Christ "*did no sin*," that I would take my stand against all the host of sceptics, to maintain his righteous claim to divinity. Whatever is of the earth must, in its inherent nature, be depraved and earthly: but here is a being in the form of man, obnoxious to the common infirmities of a created and fallen nature, and *yet without sin*, "*without spot or blemish!*"[1] Here is one having outwardly all the bodily incidents of humanity, with a mind altogether heavenly and divine, and incapable of taint! Here is a man with a body that it was not possible for death to hold captive or to corrupt, yet with a spirit that was in heaven while he himself was on earth! "No man," saith he, "hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven!" Here is a proof of his divinity springing from one of the simplest circumstances in the particulars of his history; yet a circumstance of such immense importance, that it was foretold by ancient and authentic prophecy,[2] confirmed by its actual accomplishment, acknowledged by every believer of the Gospel, and denied by no enemy,—by none, indeed, save only by Unitarians.[3]

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[1] 1 Peter, i. 19. [2] Isaiah, liii. 9.

[3] It seems incredible, but still it is so, that the Unitarians, and the Unitarians only, deny that Christ was sinless. The trash brought to prop up this horrible perversion may be seen in a long note on Hebrews, vii. 28. of the *Improved* Version. Yet what say the Scriptures?—

God

The Defendant next proceeds to say, "that, after his baptism, Christ retired to the wilderness, where he was fully *instructed in the nature of his mission, and invested with voluntary miraculous powers, which, by the* VISIONARY *scene of his temptation, he was instructed to exercise, not for his own personal advantage, but solely for the purposes of his mission,*" — insinuations the most gross and the most degrading. This very common man, as they make of the divine Jesus, required, according to their belief, forty days' instruction, in retirement, for the knowledge of his mission; when his own simple, fearful, ignorant disciples were prepared for theirs by the momentary conversion wrought on them by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost — by the instantaneous impulse of that Spirit which he, Christ, their own Lord and Master, himself poured out upon them! After this we are told

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God hath made him to be sin for us, who *knew no sin.* — 2 Cor. v. 21.

He was tempted like as we are, *yet without sin.* — Heb. iii. 13.

Whoso committeth sin, transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law: but in him is *no sin.* — 1 John, iii. 4,5.

Christ, through the *eternal* Spirit, offered himself *without spot* to God. — Heb. ix. 14.

He once suffered for our sins, *the just for the unjust.* — 1 Pet. iii. 18.

He shall appear a second time *without sin.* — Heb. ix. 28.

He that committeth sin is of the Devil; whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin. — 1 John, iii. 8, 9.

Christ himself asked, Which of you convinceth me of sin? — John, viii. 46. and John, xiv. 30.

that a *visionary* scene was presented to his mind, in which an *ideal* Spirit came to tempt him to fail in the promise he had made of saving mankind. Now, mark the consequence which is to follow these *visionary* trials. By the example which he gave in resisting the allurements of an *unreal* tempter, he is to teach mankind how to resist temptations that were to be *real*, and of perpetual occurrence. O most lame and impotent conclusion! But the absurdity ends not here. He was, moreover, endued with a voluntary power of working miracles; but, as this teacher was open to *frailties* and to *sin*, it was necessary to guard against an abuse of this voluntary power: this restraint, therefore, was cautiously imposed upon him, "that he should not work miracles for his own advantage or profit, but solely for the purpose of his mission!" What more earthly and groveling can be conceived than this! Really there is something so puerile, so contemptible, so absurd, in these vile suppositions, that I cannot further stoop to refute them, nor can I suppose that any Jury in this country were so void of understanding or feeling as to require that I should; much less can I deem it necessary to rebut that further charge of ignorance imputed to "*Him* who knew all things," of incapacity to judge of what was real, and what was unreal, as regarded himself; and that he should be in such a state of doubt, uncertainty, and blindness, as "*to apprehend*

himself transported into heaven, when only he was favoured with a divine vision.[1]

Next, Gentlemen, we come to another point of great importance. After all that we have heard and believed, what, think you, was the purport of the death of Christ? Perhaps you are irrational enough to think, with St. Paul, that he offered "himself a sacrifice to God for the sins of the world?" that "he died for our sins?" that "he was delivered for our offences?" that "he tasted death for every man?" or, with St. Peter, perhaps, you think that "he bare our sins in his own body upon the tree?" that "he *once* suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God?" and that in this manner he fulfilled the prediction of Isaiah, — "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all?"[2] "No such thing," say the Defendants: "you and the two Apostles are wholly in an error. *Christ did not suffer death to appease the wrath, or to satisfy the justice, of God. In no sense did he make an atonement for sin.*[3] You are entirely mistaken, and so is St. John when he ignorantly says, 'He is the *propitiation* for our sins; and not for our sins only,

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[1] Calm Inquiry, p. 449.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 3. Rom. iv. 25. 1 Pet. ii. 24. 1 Pet. iii. 18. Isaiah, liii. 4.

[3] Calm Inquiry, p. 450.

but also for the sins of the whole world.'[1] The idea is as contrary to reason as you must see it is to Scripture. No: "the sole purport of Christ's death was, that he might fall a martyr to the truth." "To what truth?" you ask; "to the truth of our being redeemed and saved by him?" No: "*to the truth of his resurrection from the grave. This, and this only, was the purport of his coming into the world.*" Now, Gentlemen, you will have the goodness to bear in mind that Christ, pointing to his own body, said, "Destroy *this* Temple, and in three days *I* will raise it up." "*I* lay down my life, that I might take it again; *I* have power to lay it down, and *I* have power to take it again."[2] Yet he elsewhere says, "As *The Father* raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so *The Son* quickeneth whom he will."[3] Who can read these passages and not see that the Son made himself a voluntary sacrifice, and that the Father and the Son are spoken of as possessing equal power? With respect to the particular mode of death which Christ was to suffer, our Lord did not think fit to disclose it otherwise than by a similitude; that as the brazen serpent was raised up by Moses, in order that the children of Israel, at the sight of it, might be cured of bodily disease,

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[1] 1 John, ii. 2.
[2] John, xi. 19. and x. 17.
[3] John, v. 21.

so the Messiah was to be lifted up, that, by a stedfast looking to, and firm belief in him, so raised up, all men might be healed of the spiritual disease, the disease of sin, — "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." No words could more pointedly express the efficacy of the death of Christ. He is lifted up,[1] or crucified, *in order that* whosoever *believeth* in him may have eternal life. Now, surely men might have believed (and many did believe) that Jesus was the Messiah, a Prophet sent from God, without his being crucified; and, indeed, our Saviour does not say that he was to be crucified that men might believe in him, but in order that those who *did believe* in him might be saved. It is then a plain and necessary inference, that the death of Christ was the indispensable condition of man's salvation, and that the belief required of Christians is a belief in the efficacy of that death." [2]

Yet it is but fair to the Defendants to say, that if only to prove the certainty of the resurrection from the grave were the object of the death of Christ, and the instruction of mankind in morality, were the sole purport of his coming into the world, certainly a very common man with the delegated

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[1] "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." "This," adds the Evangelist, "he said, signifying what *death* he should die."

[2] Bishop Blomfield's "Five Lectures," p. 47.

powers of heaven was quite sufficient to answer these purposes; and all that our Scriptures tell us, how, "that he purchased the Church of God with his own blood;" — "that he came to give his life a *ransom* for many;" — "that we are bought with a price;" — "that he redeemed us to God by his blood;" [1] — and all such things, are merely the illusions of a vain philosophy, upon which we can build nothing; although St. John would persuade us that "through faith in him we are no longer children of wrath, but are made children of grace, for, as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe in his name;* which were born not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." [2] But we have not so learned Christ: we have been taught from our youth up until now, with those Scriptures in our hands, that Christ was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" that the whole Jewish ceremonial law was one continued type of his coming into the world to offer himself a piacular victim, an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of the human race; that the paschal lamb, a male, a firstling without spot or blemish, to be killed, but whose bones were not to

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[1] Acts, xx. 28. Matt. xx. 28. and 1 Tim. ii. 6. 1 Cor. iv. 20. Rev. v. 9. and 1 Pet. i. 19.

[2] John, ii. 12.

be broken, and whose blood was to be poured out upon the earth, was the emblem of the Lamb of God, and that thus the Jewish law of ceremonies "was the schoolmaster which brought us to Christ," by showing that he was the substance and reality of what that law was the mere shadow. St. Paul has indeed said, in language which I should have thought it impossible to have misunderstood: — "We are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation* through faith in his blood."[1] — "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."[2] — "God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more then, being now justified by his blood we shall be saved from wrath through him: for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."[3] But on these points,

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[1] Rom. iii. 24. The word which is here rendered *propitiation*, means, properly, a *propitiatory victim*, (ἱλαστήριον). In 1 John, ii. 2. the word signifies the propitiation itself, (ἱλασμός). — Schleusner in voce.

[2] Rom. v. 6.

[3] Rom. v. 10. The death of Christ is here so distinctly spoken of as the mean, or medium, of our atonement, or reconciliation with God, κατηλλάγημεν τῷ Θεῷ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ Υἱοῦ αυτοῦ, that the doctrine of the atonement by his blood would stand immoveably upon this single text of Scripture. — Bishop Blomfield.

the Apostle and the Defendants are directly at issue; and as we stand wondering how it is possible for any to elude the force of these unequivocal declarations, in comes the Defendant Priestley, with his pruning knife in hand, and, without attempting to untie the knot, cuts it asunder, exclaiming, "I do not see that we are under any obligation to believe this or that, merely because it was an *opinion* held by an Apostle!"[1] We however feel ourselves bound by such an obligation, and prefer the testimony of St. Paul, supported as he is by St. Peter, who says, "We are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as a Lamb without blemish and without spot;" — backed, as they both are, by the prophets Daniel and Isaiah,[2] to the rash judgment of those who have thus dared to tax this *chosen vessel* of the Lord with error and inaccuracy.[3]

The Defendants, withholding from us salvation

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[1] Hist. of Early Opinions, vol. i. p. 163.

[2] 1 Pet. i. 19. Dan. ii. 24. Isaiah, liii. 6—12.

[3] I think I have shown that the Apostle Paul often reasons *inconclusively*. — Priestley's Hist. of Corrup. vol. ii. p. 370.

Such, no doubt, was the Apostle's meaning, *if he had any meaning at all*. — Belsham's Trans. of St. Paul's Ep. vol. i. p. 171.

The Apostle does not say that he was inspired to assert the literal truth of the Mosaic history of the fall; *probably he knew no more of it than we do*. — Ibid. vol. i. p. 110.

This *incorrectness* of style is not uncommon in the sacred writers, and St. Paul has before availed himself of the ambiguity of the word *angel*. — Improved Version, note on Heb. ii. 5.

through the satisfaction and blood of Christ; having cut Him down to the standard of a mortal and a very common man, proceed next to deny, contrary to our fondest, and, as we thought, our well founded hopes, that Christ is our Intercessor, Mediator, and Advocate, "sitting on the right hand of the Majesty on high," to intercede with God for his people. They affirm that he has never ascended from the earth at all, but is merely "*withdrawn;*" and this "*removal*," say they, "*from the society of mankind is a circumstance described as an ascension into heaven;*" intimating that this superstitious belief springs from the heathen notion of an apotheosis of a human creature; so that, in fact, what happened to Christ was only the repetition of what had previously been done in the case of Lazarus. Now, St. Paul's character on this account ought to be less appreciated than it is; for he has again led us into error by stating, that "Christ, our High Priest of good things to come, has entered into the Holy Place, a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands;" — and not only has St. Paul been mistaken on this point, but David and Micah also, who both predicted that Christ should ascend up on high, and that the gates of heaven should open to him, the King of Glory.[1] And, if my memory does not

[1] Heb. ix. 11. Micah, ii. 13. Ps. lxviii. 18. Ps. xxiv. 9.

deceive me, I think our Saviour himself, when he appeared to Mary Magdalene, said, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;" — having long previously said to Nicodemus, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven:" — nor must I forget to remind you that he still more expressly said, "I am the *living bread*" (in contrast with the bread or manna which fell from heaven upon the Israelites), — "I am the *living* bread, which came down from heaven;" — an expression which the Jews understood to be an assumption of divinity, and which, indeed, gave such offence to his disciples, that, remarking it, he said, "Does this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up *where he was before?*"[1] All this the Defendants represent as improbable, useless, metaphorical, unreal, and altogether untrue. According to them, Christ is said in Scripture to have created all things *by a figure!* — he made an atonement for the sins of mankind *by a figure!* Satan and all Angels are *fictitious* personages; and here Christ is said to have ascended into heaven *by a figure!* Yet when our Lord "led his disciples out to Bethany and blessed them," he did not appear *in a figure* before them, but was actually, *corporeally*, present with them: he walked out from the city in their company, and when he had reached Bethany, —

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[1] John, vi. 42.

when he had conversed with them, and given them his blessing, they saw him, not suddenly snatched from their view, as he had been from the sight of the two disciples at Emmaus, but they beheld him slowly and gradually rise up into the heavens; and as they stood gazing upwards, in the direction beyond which their mortal ken could not reach, there came two Angels in human form, who addressed not one but all of them, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken *up from you into heaven*, shall so come in like manner as ye have *seen him go into heaven*." [1] And thus, "as he came from God, so he went to God." [2]

Having denied us Christ as our sacrifice of atonement, — having denied him to be our Advocate, Intercessor, and Mediator with God in heaven, — having robbed us of those blessings which could only be purchased by his blood, and which the sufferings, and death, and blood of none but EMMANUEL himself could obtain for us, — the Defendants aim to leave us still more comfortless, by taking away from us the gracious influence of that Holy Spirit which was given to supply his removal, — given to comfort, to guide, to encourage and assist us, in all dangers ghostly and bodily; and we are told what, if true, we should receive with infinite

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[1] Acts, i. 11. [2] John, xiii. 3.

concern and amazement, that "the personal or sensible connection which Christ promised, was only to *continue during the apostolic age*, since which he is withdrawn from all sensible (and, by inference, all imperceptible) intercourse with the world; though, perhaps, he may be (wherever he is) still attentive to its concerns." [1]

Gentlemen, — Can you consent to give up for yourselves and your children, and for the Christian world, all these mighty blessings? Will you consent to yield all the clear and express promises made of them in your Scriptures, without some resistance? The witnesses who have appeared before you this day have shown to demonstration, that the Apostles, one and all, speak and declare against this cruel and wicked plunder of our spiritual possessions. Upon what grounds do the Defendants set up their plea for this oppression and robbery? Will they venture to say that the inspired teachers of these doctrines were mistaken in these points? and that they have taught us *not* "the truth as it is in Jesus?" You would scarcely believe it possible, had you not heard it, that they do virtually assert this. They declare "that *they utterly deny the universal inspiration of these writers*, but *they judge* of the *genuineness*, *the meaning*, and *the credibility* of their works, exactly as they judge

[1] Calm Inquiry, p. 453.

of any other ancient writing:" that is, by the measure of their own reason crippled and paralysed by their peculiar prejudices and their erring will. Now, to this I answer by using the words and language of one of the witnesses, — "You will esteem it an objection of little weight, that the modern advocates of the Unitarian tenets cannot otherwise give a colour to their wretched cause than by denying the inspiration of the sacred historians, that they may seem to themselves at liberty to reject their testimony. You will remember that the doctrines of the Christian revelation were not originally delivered in a system, but interwoven in the history of our Saviour's life. To say, therefore, that the first preachers were not inspired in the composition of the narratives in which their doctrine is conveyed, is nearly the same thing as to deny their inspiration in general. You will, perhaps, think it incredible that they who were assisted by the Divine Spirit when they preached, should be deserted by that Spirit when they committed what they had preached to writing. You will think it improbable that they who were endowed with the gift of discerning spirits, should be endowed with no gift of discerning the truth of facts. You will recollect one instance upon record, in which St. Peter detected a falsehood by the light of inspiration; and you will perhaps be inclined to think that it could be of no less importance to the

Church, that the Apostles and Evangelists should be enabled to detect falsehoods in the history of our Saviour's life, than that St. Peter should be enabled to detect Ananias's lie about the sale of his estate. You will think it unlikely that they who were led by the Spirit into all truth, should be permitted to lead the whole Church for many ages into error; that they should be permitted to leave behind them, as authentic memoirs of their Master's life, narratives compiled, with little judgment or selection, from the stories of the day, from facts and fictions in promiscuous circulation. The credulity which swallows these contradictions, while it strains at mysteries, is not the faith which will remove mountains. The Ebionites of antiquity, little as they were famed for penetration and discernment, managed however the affairs of the sect with more discretion than our modern Unitarians. They questioned not the inspiration of the books which they received; but they received only one book, — a spurious copy of St. Matthew's Gospel, curtailed of the two first chapters." [1]

It is extraordinary with what pains and anxieties the Defendants labour to dishonour Him who claimed for himself the same honour that was due to his heavenly Father. With the same disregard of Scripture, the same aim to pervert it to a mean-

[1] Horsley's Sermons, vol. iii. p. 87.

ing suited to their own earthly notions, they pretend to show that Christ when he comes to judgment, that is, from his seat in heaven, with all the retinue of Angels and all the heavenly host, will come forth, not from the right hand of God, but from some uncelestial abode with a *delegated* power as a sort of puisne Judge of the great Assize, with the Apostles associated with him in the same commission.[1] But let any one read only the latter half of the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and say whether we have not, in that sublime Scripture, not only reason for the expectation of a very different advent, but a hope of the coming of such a judge, in that most awful and tremendous day of trial, of which no groveling scheme of rational religion can deprive us. With gratitude to the all-merciful Father in heaven, we accept the coming of the Son of Man as our great Judge, because he has been made flesh for us, and has taken a human body in which "he has been tempted in all points, like as we are, yet without sin."

Having made every attempt to lower the dignity of our Saviour, it is only mere consistency in the Defendants to deny that he can be a proper object of religious worship, although he himself said, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." This denial and the grounds of it have been so fully and so com-

[1] Calm Inquiry, p. 453.

pletely refuted by the evidence of the witnesses, that it is unnecessary for me to attempt to add greater weight to their arguments; I shall, therefore, only observe, in passing, that St. John appears to me to establish the claim which the blessed Son of God demanded, when he required "that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father."[1] "These things have I written unto you, that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence we have in *him*, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions we desired of him."[2] But in another part of the same epistle, the same precept is repeated, with this only difference, that the word "God" is used instead of "Christ." We have confidence towards *God*, and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him."[3] Now, I ask, can any man read these two passages, and doubt for a single moment whether his Saviour be the God that heareth prayer?[4] The witness Burton has shown that it was the practice of the earliest Christians to address prayer to Christ; and to his testimony I have only to add that of Justin Martyr. "We worship and adore," says he, "the God of Righteousness,

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[1] John, v. 23.
[2] 1 John, v. 13, 14.
[3] 1 John, iii. 21.
[4] Bishop Horne's Sermon xxxiv.

and his Son, and the Holy Spirit of prophecy: " — "We hold it unlawful to worship any but God alone." In this he is joined by Origen, who says, "We worship and adore no creature, but the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." [1] It must be observed, also, that when Christ prayed himself to the Father in the character of a teacher sent unto them, he speaks with propriety as if the Father were *the only God*, and he himself a *man*. "This (saith he) is life eternal, that they might know thee the *only* true *God*, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." But when he has once said, "I have *finished* the work which thou gavest me to do," — then another scene opens upon us: we are in heaven; Christ is ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high; the *earthly* things, the earthly offices, of the Messiah are vanished; and if we give in to this conception, we shall rightly feel and understand what follows: — "And *now*, O Father, glorify thou *me* with thine own *self*, with the glory which I had with thee *before* the world was." [2] Pliny, who wrote in the beginning of the second century, and who was employed by the emperor Trajan to examine into the principles of the sect of the Christians, says: —

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[1] Justin Martyr, Apol. 4. Origen, Comm. in Ep. ad Rom. lib. i.

[2] Compare John, xvii. 3, 4. 11. John, x. 30. Lev. xxiv. 16. See Hey's Lectures, vol. ii. p. 266.

"Their custom is to meet on a certain day before it is light, and among other parts of their worship they sing an hymn to Christ, *as their God.*" [1] And, beyond all this, Christ himself said, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." — "*I am* IN *the Father*, and the Father in me." — "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that *will I do.*" [2] — Yet, directly in the face of all this, the Defendants hazard this bold, and, as I think, most false assertion: — We are fully persuaded, in refusing this homage, which is in itself polytheistical and idolatrous, that we act in perfect conformity to the authority and example of Jesus, and in a manner of which he himself would testify the most entire approbation, if he were to appear in person upon earth.[3] This is as much as to say, We are right in our opinion that Christ is a mere common man, and as such, worship to him is an act of superstitious idolatry; and if you ask us why we say so, in flat contradiction to all

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[1] Carmenque Christo, *quasi Deo*, dicere secum invicem. — Lib. x. ep. 97.

Eusebius quotes the Presbyter Caius as appealing to Melito, Irenæus, and Clement, whether they did not declare Christ to be both God and Man, and whether "the songs and psalms, written from the *first* by the faithful brethren, did not ascribe divinity to Christ, and celebrate him as the WORD of God?" Ψαλμοὶ δὲ ὅσοι καὶ ᾠδαὶ ἀδελφῶν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὑπὸ πιστῶν γραφεῖσαι ΤΟΝ ΛΟΓΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ ΤΟΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΝ ΥΜΝΟΥΣΙ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΟΥΝΤΕΣ. — Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 28.

[2] John, xiv. 9. 11. 13.

[3] Calm Inquiry, p. 454.

that you pretend to prove, our answer is, — We will give no other reason than this, and a sufficient one it is, viz., that we are *quite sure* that we are *right*. Then again they return to the charge, and take up their former position, and say, "Jesus declared himself to be a man, a fact which must be admitted without hesitation;" and it is readily admitted by all Christians; for we, one and all, declare that, truly, "he was made man, — made of a woman." "But," they continue, "all that is asserted of his divinity is founded merely *upon oblique hints, obscure, figurative, and ambiguous phraseology.*" [1] "How then," we ask, "do you get rid of such as are not obscure, but which speak clearly and simply to the point?" "Oh," they reply, "all that you conceive to speak of the divinity of Jesus, applies not to himself, but to the *divine original of his doctrine.*" "Why, is not Christ said to be the Creator and Maker of all things?" I ask. "Yes," they answer; "but you are surely not so simple as to conceive that he was the Maker of the *natural world:* no, no, he was Maker, we tell you, of the *new creation,* — the new *moral* world!" "But Christ is said to be with God, and to be God himself." "Ay, so *your* Scriptures say; but even them you do not understand, for they speak of him thus, only to imply that he was invested with

[1] Calm Inquiry, p. 456.

a power of working miracles, and is called a god only in the same sense that Moses was a god to Pharaoh. But, let us tell you, to put an end to all farther dispute, that Christians have as great and just a claim to divinity as Christ himself had, inasmuch as they are the *sons* or children of God." [1]

Can it be necessary to go farther into this rational scheme of rational Christians, to show the defamatory blasphemous nature of this abhorrent and truly *ungodly* system? There is no arguing with men who have no other data than their own shifting unstable fancies to reason upon; and, as their Scriptures and ours are so directly opposed to each other, it is in vain to expect that we can maintain any one doctrine in common with them. The witnesses have proved again and again, and they have adduced evidence from the most learned and pious of the Christian world to show, that Jehovah, in the Old Testament, and our Lord, in the New, are one and the same; yet these men, perverse to the very last, persist in saying (but it is only *saying*) that the Scriptures, ours and theirs, explicitly and repeatedly assert "that Christ was not personally concerned in any of the former dispensations of God to mankind, either to the Pa-

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[1] The same, or even *stronger*, expressions are applied to Christians in general than those from which the deity of Christ is usually inferred. — Calm Inquiry, p. 458.

triarchs or to the Jews:" yet, if additional testimony were wanted to establish the direct contrary, I would adduce that simple circumstance which took place at the crucifixion, where a Roman soldier with his spear pierced the side of Jesus, and which St. John says was done in the fulfilment of prophecy, — "They shall look on him whom they have pierced." [1] Now, upon referring to the original prediction, we find that it is *Jehovah* introduced, saying, "They shall look upon ME whom they have pierced." [2] But, setting all this aside, allow me, Gentlemen, to put a case on which you can as well judge as any theologians whatever.

The New Testament represents, and Jesus asserted, that *he was man:* now, the same Scriptures, and the same Jesus, as often, if not oftener, affirm, and still more frequently imply, that he was the Son of God, one with the Father. If we adopt the reasoning and the argument made use of by the Defendants, I can, with equal truth and propriety, upon their own grounds, maintain that Jesus Christ was God, and *not man:* but, taking the true and correct mode of simple and legitimate reasoning, we arrive at this point, that he was both God and man, "God of the substance of

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[1] Compare John, xix. 37. with Zech. xii. 10.

[2] In Gen. xv. 1. 4., 1 Sam. iii. 7. 21. and xv. 10., 1 Kings, xiii. 9. 17. and xix. 9. 15., Ps. cvii. 20., have דבר יהוה *Debar Yehovah*, The WORD of JEHOVAH.

the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man of the substance of his mother, born in the world; equal to the Father as touching his Godhead, but inferior to the Father as touching his manhood:" "who," says St. Paul, "*in the days of his flesh*, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared: though *he were a Son*, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."[1] And why was it that he took upon him this flesh, and became Son of God, of God; and Son of Man, of woman; and was made subject to these sufferings, and to this death? Because it was originally foretold, and first promised, that *the seed of the* WOMAN should bruise the serpent's head. Observe, Gentlemen, "the seed of *the Woman:*" no mention is made of *the Man:* so that this birth of the Saviour was to be effected, not after the ordinary and natural manner; for then, how could Christ have been the Son of God (properly so called), as the angel Gabriel had declared? No: this birth was to be accompanied with superhuman circumstances; so that, when Isaiah said, "*A Virgin* shall conceive, and bear a Son," the Jews did not, nor could they then, comprehend how that were possible to happen. But afterwards the difficulty was

[1] Heb. v. 7, 8.

removed, and we have seen how Christ was both God and Man, — God, as generated by his pre-existing Divinity, which overshadowed the Virgin; and Man, as born of *Woman*, of the Virgin herself.

The last argument I shall adduce in proof of Christ's being "very God of very God," is that furnished by the Jews themselves, when, upon several occasions, they charged our Lord with blasphemy for his assumption of divinity, and for his putting himself upon an equality with the One God whom they worshipped. On one of these occasions he declared to the Jews that fact openly and unambiguously, — "I and the Father are one:" upon which they immediately took up stones to put him to that death which the law sanctioned against blasphemers; and when he remonstrated with them against the act, and reminded them of the many good works which he had done amongst them, what was their reply? — "For a good work we stone thee not, but because thou, being a man, *makest thyself God.*" [1] Here it is evident that his claim to divinity brought this charge against him; for it had not been blasphemy if his claim had been merely to the title of a god by virtue of his office. Again, when, upon another occasion, he told the Jews, "Before Abraham was,

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[1] Levit. xxiv. 14. 16. John, x. 33.

I am ; " the assumption, not only of a pre-existing state, but of the title of Jehovah (I AM), again brought upon him their indignation, at what they conceived his abhorrent blasphemy, and once more they would have stoned him to death, had he not exerted his own inherent heavenly power, and vanished from their sight, by the exercise of that miraculous power which he only rarely exerted for his own personal security during his ministry.[1] Again, when he healed the man sick of the palsy, by saying, " Man, thy sins are forgiven thee," the Scribes and Pharisees declared that he had spoken blasphemy by assuming the attribute and prerogative of God, and of God only, in his pardon of sin[2] — Jesus, instead of clearing himself by disclaiming the intention, persisted in his right to it; and further, to show that, though the Son of Man, the power of forgiving sins was his own attribute, he added, "*I* say unto thee, arise, take up thy couch, and go unto thine home. And *immediately* the sick man rose up before them, took up that whereon he lay, and departed, glorifying God." Then followed all that surprise, and

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[1] When Christ asked those who came to capture him, " Whom seek ye?" and they answered him, " Jesus of Nazareth;" he said to them, Ἐγώ εἰμι, I AM! and such was the effect of his utterance of these words, that they were struck to the ground, and fell backward. — John, xviii. 6.

[2] Compare Isaiah, xliii. 25. and Luke, iv. 21.

awe, and wonder, which the Defendants say should have followed, had he been known to be one with God; for the people "were all *amazed*, and glorified God, and were *filled with fear*, saying, We have seen strange things to-day." [1] They were not seized with an uncommon amazement at the miracle itself, for he had before cured a man of leprosy under ordinary symptoms of wonder; but because the manner of effecting the miracle suddenly proved his divinity, by the discovery of his own attribute of pardoning sin. In the last place, when Christ stood arraigned before the High Priest, and the members of the Jewish Council; and the High Priest *adjured* him to declare whether he were Christ, the Son of God, he gave them at once to understand that he laid claim to that honour, and that he was very God. The High Priest immediately rent his clothes, in token of his abhorrence at the assertion, and cried out, "What further need have we of witnesses? behold now ye have heard his *blasphemy!*" and he was instantly condemned to death.[2] And, indeed, it seems pretty evident, by all that has been brought before us, that if the Unitarians had been present upon these occasions, they also would so far have taken part with the Jews, as to have declared him guilty of blasphemy. But I trust that you, Gentlemen,

[1] Luke, v. 26.

[2] Matt. xxvi. 65.

will have no hesitation in repelling such a charge from the blessed Jesus, and of turning it against those who deny him to be *their* God, and look upon us as credulous fools and madmen for believing him to be *ours*. And when we have shown you to demonstration, that the Defendants, by their self-made, rational, scheme and system of religion, contend,

That Christ is not the Son of the Most High, nor born of a *Virgin*.

That he was a mere man, a man of ignorance, prejudices, and frailties, and *not without sin*.

That he was only a Teacher and Prophet more highly endowed than any other, and *inferior* to any heavenly being.

That he came into the world only to teach morality, and suffered only as a martyr to the truth, and died only to prove a resurrection from the grave.

That he did *not* die for the sins of mankind, and therefore is not our Redeemer.

That he was not the Lamb of God, offered as a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice or oblation and satisfaction to the justice of God, for his fallen and sinful creatures.

That he did *not* ascend up into heaven, and therefore is neither our Advocate, nor Intercessor, nor Mediator.

That he will only be constituted a Judge of the

quick and dead in a commission with his Apostles, to award a sentence of which we know nothing at present.

That he had no power and no authority to assist mankind after his death.

That he can neither be a Comforter, nor send the Holy Spirit to dwell among us, and therefore that we have no Sanctifier.

That there is no Holy Ghost, no Son of God, no Trinity in Unity.

That there is no Evil Spirit, no Satan, no Devil, no Wicked One.

That the temptation of Christ in the wilderness was all a mere vision.

That what the Apostles have written is not to be regarded in every part as inspiration, but only so much of it as Unitarians will condescend to admit; and therefore the Holy Spirit did not guide them to all truth.[1]

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[1] Perniciosa cumprimìs est hæresis Sociniana, quâ inter hodiernas, sub nomine Christiano, nulla æquè detestanda. Non enim hæc articulum aliquem religionis, sed ejus animam et fundamenta concutit et evertit fermè secundùm hanc, et Christus nihil est nisi Doctor aliquis, aut Martyr egregius; ejus officium, docere duntaxat, non verè redimere; Evangelium, altera lex; justificatio, propter opera; probitas, solummodò ethica; infernus, et animæ plurimorum post hanc vitam, nihil; quodque primo loco dicendum fuerat, S. in Deo Trinitas ludibrium et idolum. Quæ omnia, üsque annexa capita et errores, quantopere totam theologiam et religionem

Now, I ask, what can this "system of the best practical Deism," as the witness Horsley calls it; or "this sort of infidelity in disguise," as the great Warburton designated it, be, but as gross and scandalous a libel as can be published against the Christian Religion; against Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour; and against his holy Apostles? I do not mean, however, to say by this that the Defendants are not sincere in their principles, but only to protest against the baneful influence of their principles, and to show and declare that, rational Christians as they may deem themselves, they are egregiously mistaken, and obstinately perverse in their errors; and that their principles only serve to shelter and cover Deists and others, who, arraying themselves under the guise of Unitarianism, screen from public view and public odium the indecencies of a more odious infidelity. There is nothing, indeed, in the system to captivate the affections of the soul. All there is cold and comfortless, and these deadly feelings are maintained at the expense of all that is fair, and open, and invigorating, in the Christian scheme; at the expense of unsatisfactory quibbles, gross distortions, and crooked criticism, which, though the coin of an ingenious mint, is base and worthless:

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infestent ac corrumpant, nemo est qui non sentiat. — Hoornbeck de Socinianismo, p. 441.

a system it is, that only flatters a false pride of sophism, at the expense of all that is pious, all that is honest and good, in philosophy. I therefore earnestly call upon you, Gentlemen, to mark your abhorrence of it, that it may go forth to all the world that an enlightened, rational, and religious Jury, of the most liberal and intelligent kingdom of the earth, after a full, fair, and clear investigation, have pronounced the several writings of the Defendants to be libels against the Established Religion of the State,—against the Religion of him who was truly the Son of God. By such a verdict you may guard, at least, some portion of mankind from falling under that fearful denunciation, which we will sincerely hope, through the mercy and the merits of this injured Christ, may be the final doom of none. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall they be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith they are sanctified an unholy thing, and have done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

The Judge then charged the Jury.

Gentlemen of the Jury,—The three Defendants are charged, on an Information filed by his Majesty's Attorney-General, with each having written and published works irreverently reflecting upon the great fundamental doctrine of the Christian Re-

ligion, — which doctrine, as grounded on Scripture, the Established Church receives and upholds; and therefore the offence with which they are charged has reference both to the Holy Scriptures and to the Religion of the State. I need only remind you that we live in a Christian country, and that the Legislature has recognised the canonical books of the Old and New Testament as being authentic and genuine Scripture, — as being most true and holy, — as being the inspired Word of God. From this volume of inspiration has been drawn, by the wisest, the most learned and pious men, a form of public prayer and worship, which, also, the Legislature has received as being in exact harmony and consistency with the Scriptures, fairly and simply interpreted. The Defendants are charged with denying these Scriptures in many parts to be either canonical or true, and they have proceeded to alter them to suit an interpretation which, if right, goes to show that the State is in error, and that its learned and pious men are mistaken in their notions of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. They declare that the Scriptures themselves are incorrect both with regard to the matter and manner of their contents; and that, from deducing doctrines not to be found in them, the community is made polytheistical and idolatrous in its worship. It must be evident to you, Gentlemen, that by representing the National Faith and worship as corrupt, the object and

effect of the writings of the Defendants must be to alienate the people from belief in the accepted Scriptures, and also from conforming to the prescribed worship grounded upon them; a proceeding which the Law of the land will not permit, because it tends to unsettle and mislead the public mind, to weaken the sacred cause of religion, and to cut asunder all the ties which bind the people in social compact together. The Law of the land, certainly, cannot so bind the conscience as to compel an involuntary belief on such an awful and high subject as that of religion; but it has such a control over human action, as justly to command outward reverence and respect for that belief, and that form of worship, which the community at large regards and holds as sacred. However the conduct of the official advocate of the crown may be considered as savouring of intolerance and persecution, I, for one, cannot regret that he has thought fit to bring this high matter to the scrutiny of a British Jury, and a British Court of Justice; because, if what we have been taught to believe of the holy volume of Scripture has been false, the sooner we are made sensible of our error, and can retract from it, the better and safer it must be for us all: while on the other hand, if those Scriptures have been cut down, and mutilated, and misinterpreted, by the Defendants, it is but common justice that their practices

and pernicious errors should be exposed to all the censure and contempt which they deserve.

Gentlemen, — You have heard this day the body of evidence brought against the Defendants; you have heard and witnessed how they have met it: but, that you may be guided in your verdict only by the evidence adduced, and that you may not be led away to the one side or to the other, by either the justification of the Defendants, or by the allegations of the learned advocate, I proceed to recapitulate the testimony of each witness as it has been given, and I beg to observe that I shall forbear making a single comment of my own as I proceed, that you may be swayed by nothing but your own clear and unbiassed judgment in returning such a verdict as your consciences approve.

His Lordship then recapitulated the evidence as it is here given, when he proceeded to observe: —

I have now fully detailed all the particulars of the case, as the witnesses have severally deposed to it; and have therefore only further to observe, that Christianity is a part of the law of England, and was so held from the earliest periods of our history. At the Reformation, and by several subsequent acts in the reign of Edward the Sixth, and of Elizabeth, the form of the national religion was established; but after the restoration of Charles ths Second, the Act of Uniformity, as it was called, was passed, and provided that form of public prayer which was

inserted in the "Common-Prayer Book," and ordained to be kept in all parts of the country as a record, to be produced, if necessary, in courts of justice. Now, though the Law, as I have before observed, does not forbid the decent discussion of the theological subjects to which it referred, it does not allow the Scriptures to be scoffed at, or treated with irreverence and contempt; much less does it permit any part of them to be upheld as false and unworthy of belief. It is for you, Gentlemen, to consider whether in your judgment, the several writings of the Defendants which have been brought before you, and which they have acknowledged to be theirs, do not come under the description of those forbidden by the statute; and whether, if so, they are not gross libels upon the Holy Scriptures; upon the Christian Religion; and, consequently, upon the Religion of the State as by the Law established. If, in your opinion, the Defendants have erred only in judgment, and not from any evil intention either to Religion or to the State, it is still your duty to find them guilty; because, the conviction of their having offended against law or not, rests upon your verdict; the degree of punishment is to be determined by the Court; and, be assured, that will be measured in exact proportion to the intention with which the offence has been committed. If, on the other hand, you are of opinion that the Defendants by their writings have not traduced the Holy Scriptures

and the Christian Religion, — that they have not impugned that holy doctrine which the Law protects, and declares to be the fundamental doctrine of Christian faith and practice, — that they have not committed the offence imputed to them; then you are to pronounce them not guilty. But, in either case, if you have the least hesitation upon these points, and cannot at once come to a clear and certain decision upon them, I must tell you, that you are then bound in conscience to give the Defendants the benefit of your doubts.

The Jury conferred together without leaving the box; and in about ten minutes returned by their foreman a verdict of — GUILTY.

The Attorney-General and the Judge conferred together; after which the Lord Chief Justice thus addressed the Defendants: —

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, HENRY BELSHAM: — You have heard the verdict which a most enlightened jury of your country, after a long and attentive investigation, have now delivered. I studiously abstained, in my charge, from giving the opinion which the evidence adduced before the Court led me, in my own mind, to form of the nature of the publications which have here been called in question; that opinion, however, without prejudice to your case, I may now state,

and I do so by declaring it to be in perfect unison with the verdict just pronounced. It has been well observed, " that, in spiritual matters revealed by God, the ground of our certainty lies not in the evidence of the things, but in the undoubted veracity of God who has revealed them." This, however, is not admitted by those who take reason for their only guide in matters of religion. They affirm that the veracity of God assures them that they must have a clear and distinct perception of things in the natural world before they can give belief to their reality; and, therefore, if they cannot have this clear and distinct perception in matters above their comprehension, they hold, that they are not bound to believe them. As this objection is made by those who have assumed the name of " Rational Christians," I think it not incompatible with my duty to show them that the objection is not well grounded, and that it is the cause of that unbelief which I conceive to be the rock on which yourselves have split, and which must prove hazardous to the future happiness, as well as to the present peace, of all who adopt the same principle.

It is evident that the foundation of all certainty of knowledge must be laid upon a clear and distinct perception of that which cannot be comprehended, — upon the belief of a Being absolutely perfect; for if we have not a clear and distinct perception of God, then the foundation of all cer-

tainty is destroyed at once, and there is no ground left, even for the belief of the existence of such a Being. They, therefore, who say that there can be no clear perception of God without comprehending his nature, contradict themselves; for if he be an *infinite* Being, he must be "past finding out." Hence it is evident, that there may be a clear perception when the object itself is above our capacity. Now, whatever foundation there is in nature for such a perception without understanding it, the same and greater there must also be in such things as are revealed by God, though they may be above our comprehension. The idea of God which the mind conceives cannot be so strong a proof of the existence of an incomprehensible Being, as the evidence of revealed matters of faith is a proof of their truth, though our senses are lost in attempting to understand the nature of them, and the manner of their existence. The objection made to this is most unreasonable; namely, that we are to embrace nothing for truth, though divinely revealed, but what our reason is able to comprehend, both as to the nature of the thing proposed for our belief, and the manner of its existence. On these grounds, the doctrine of the *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Satisfaction*, and consequently the whole mystery of the Gospel of Christ, must be rejected as incredible; because, though these doctrines have the support of Scripture, yet

we are bound to understand them in some other sense, consonant with our reason. But though Christianity comes to us with the highest testimony of its truth, and although we are not bound to credit any thing but what we have sufficient reason to believe to be actually revealed, yet that any such revelation should be called in question merely because reason demands a full and adequate conception of it, is a most absurd and unreasonable pretence, leading to two as absurd consequences. First, That nothing can be received as true, either in nature or religion, but what can be fully, clearly, and simply explained. Now, let any such unbelievers apply this principle to the appearances of nature, and in one moment they arrive at this difficulty, — they must not believe that the sun shines, until they have proved, by demonstrative arguments, the undoubted truth of the Ptolemaic or Copernican systems of astronomy, — they cannot believe the ebb and flow of tides, until they resolve all the doubts which hang about the different opinions concerning this phenomenon, — they cannot believe that there is any such thing as matter in the world, until they discover how the several parts of it are united, — they cannot believe that they themselves are possessed of a rational soul, because they cannot explain its union with the body. Until they can understand all these things in nature, it were useless for them to

attempt the comprehension of matters of a higher kind.

For, in the second place, this would imply that a finite creature might measure the perfections of an infinite and uncreated Being. To form a clear conception of God would be to suppose that he is not of an incomprehensible nature; for we form an idea of the Divine Being in our mind by taking away all the imperfections we find in ourselves; and if we can arrive at such a point as that of seeing that he is absolutely perfect, we are then called upon to add *infinity*, that attribute of Divinity, of which, notwithstanding the definitions which the most eminent philosophers have given, the human mind can form no conception; it cannot contemplate any thing so vast as to admit of no addition, nor any thing so small as to admit of no diminution.[1]

"It is therefore a most unreasonable mode of proceeding," as a very learned writer observes, "to examine the Word of Revelation with a preconceived resolution to reject every doctrine which shall transcend the grasp of human reason. The first step to be ascertained is, whether the Scriptures are, what they profess to be, the word of God. Having settled this to our satisfaction, the next duty is, to read them with the best attention we

[1] See Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ, book ii. c. 8.

can give to so important a study: 'to search out the testimonies of the Lord,' with a view to discovering what we are required to believe concerning him, and what we are to practise; to take the words of Scripture in their plain and obvious sense; to compare its doctrines and precepts, in order that our interpretation of them may be consistent; to rest assured that what we are unable to comprehend must yet be true, if it is distinctly stated in the Word of God; and not to guide ourselves by any such deceitful rule as this, — that where mystery begins religion ends; that whatever is not clear need not be believed; a rule by which no man thinks of guiding himself in any other branch of knowledge." [1]

I have been induced to offer these remarks with the hope that the subject of them may become a matter of greater attention and study to you, and to all who conceive themselves justified in demanding greater and higher evidence than they can possibly obtain, or, if obtained, than they could comprehend, and greater than it was clearly intended they should ever possess. I have now only to communicate to you, that the learned Attorney-General — having gained all that he aimed at in this prosecution, namely, an enquiry into a

[1] Bishop Blomfield's Sermon on "Mysteriousness of Revelation no Ground of Objection."

subject of such deep and vital importance; and having shown that the Law of the land protects the Christian Religion, and suffers it not to be lightly spoken of, or its sacred doctrines to be scoffed at; and hoping that the verdict now obtained will operate as a censure upon your writings, and put the community on their guard against them; and, lastly, feeling that the end and object of justice is amendment, and not punishment — has moved that the judgment of the Court be deferred; and, accordingly, the judgment of this Court is so deferred *sine die*.

APPENDIX.

PETITION,

PRESENTED MAY 12. 1827, BY JOSEPH HUME, ESQ.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the Elders, Deacons, and Members of the Church of God, meeting in London, and known as Freethinking Christians,

SHEWETH,

That your petitioners are an united and organised religious body, which, under the appellation of "Freethinking Christians," has existed for nearly thirty years, separate and distinct from all other religious communities.

That, whilst the Toleration Act hath secured complete liberty of opinion, your petitioners complain that, by an act of the legislature, which passed in the 26th year of the reign of George II. they are prevented entering into the marriage state without submitting to a rite of the Established Church of England, and joining in an act of religious worship with one of its ordained ministers — which act of worship is a clear and public admission of the doctrines, the authority and claims of such church.

That, to avoid all misconceptions as to their motives, to prove the extent of the grievance of which your petitioners complain, and to establish the practicability of the relief for which they pray — they humbly submit to your Honourable House a declaration of their faith and principles of union.

That, convinced of the insufficiency of what is called Natural Religion, and confirmed by evidence in their belief in Revelation, your petitioners receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as containing the revealed will of God.

That, desirous of obeying in all things the will of God, as made known by Revelation, they reject all human authority in matters of religion, making the laws of God, as contained in the Scriptures, the sole rule of their faith, discipline, and practice.

That, from a serious, unremitting, and free enquiry into the Scriptures, they have concluded and believe —

That, "there is none other God but ONE."

That "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob," "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, the Christ," is "THE ONLY TRUE GOD."

That "Jesus of Nazareth" was "a *man* approved of God by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which *God* did by him."

That he died, and, by the power of God, was "raised again, according to the Scriptures."

That God "hath appointed a day in which *he* will judge the world in righteousness by that *man* whom he hath ordained."

That God hath separated to himself a people on earth, "which is the Church of the living God — the pillar and ground of truth."

That this Church, as "the household of God," is governed by God alone, being "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus, the Christ, himself being the chief corner stone."

That the constitution, laws, and government of this Church are, in the Scriptures of the New Testament, so expressly set forth as not to need, but absolutely to preclude, all human legislation therein.

That this constitution, these laws, and this government, being of Divine appointment, cannot be violated — cannot be dispensed with — cannot be altered, abridged, or added to, without rebellion against God, and treason against his authority.

That your petitioners, *as* the Church of God, acknowledge the constitution, maintain the laws, and submit to the government, thus given by God to his Church.

They acknowledge Jesus as the sole and exclusive HEAD of the Church; for God "hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the Church."

They are one united and indivisible Body — "for as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one," so also is the Church of God.

Their members possess an equality of rights, no one being permitted to arrogate to himself religious titles and distinctions, or to call any man master on earth — "for one is your Master, even the Christ, and all ye are brethren."

They reject all hired or exclusive teachers, and in their assemblies "admonish one another" and "edify one another" according to the Scriptures — "for ye may all teach, one by one, that all may learn and all may be comforted."

They "choose out of themselves" certain officers for the regulation of their affairs, that all things may "be done decently and in order."

These officers of the Church are Bishops (i. e. overseers) or Elders and Deacons (i. e. servants) who are to serve and to take "the oversight thereof—not by constraint but willingly — not by filthy lucre, but of a ready mind — neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock."

Your petitioners further submit to your Honourable House, that, where God hath fully revealed his will to man, the rites, ceremonies, and acts of worship, in order to be acceptable to God, must be appointed by him; and believing that, since the abolition of the Mosaic ritual and temple worship, no rites, ceremonies, or public social prayer and worship, have ever been appointed by Divine Authority, they, as the disciples of Jesus, and in obedience to his commands, "pray in secret to the Father," and, as the true worshippers, "worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

That rejecting, like the Jewish people of old, the pretensions of every Church whose doctrines, discipline, and worship are not founded on the laws of God without any

admixture of human authority, and required, as they are, by law, to conform to the established Church in the instance of marriage, your petitioners DECLARE AND AVOW *that the Church of England*, whose religious worship they are thus called upon to sanction, they know only as a Church teaching for doctrines the commandments of men — as a Church professing a religion *which has no other claim than that of being "by law established"* — as a Church whose laws *have no earlier date than Popery, no higher authority than Acts of Parliament;* — as a Church whose only head is an earthly potentate, fallible in all cases; *corrupt and wicked* in the instance of its founder Henry VIII., yet nevertheless, by law "vested with all power to exercise all manner of ecclesiastical jurisdiction" — as a Church whose ministers and pastors *are the servants of the State only*, possessing "*no manner of jurisdiction ecclesiastical, but by and under the King or Queen's Majesty;*" — as a Church whose rites and ceremonies, whether of baptism, the Lord's Supper, or for the solemnisation of marriage, *are maintained only by a self-asserted authority* "to decree Rites and Ceremonies;" — as a Church *whose lordly Prelates and aspiring Priesthood retain their office, titles, and privileges in opposition to the clear and express commands of Jesus;* — as a Church whose tithes and revenues *constitute a violation at once of the rights of property, and of the laws of God;* — as a Church whose *unrighteous claims* are supported by an appeal to the hopes and fears of men, *profanely* asserting "that every priest of this church hath power and authority from Almighty God, in the name of the Holy Trinity, to *forgive* or to *retain the sins of men;*" — as a Church whose *unscriptural faith* is fulminated by means of a creed which is at the same time *intolerant in its spirit and contradictory in its assertions;* "which faith," *it is impiously avowed*, "except every one doth keep whole and undefiled, he shall, without doubt, perish everlastingly;" — as a Church whose canons denounce curses and excommunication upon all who, following the dictates of conscience, shall, like your petitioners, "affirm that the form of God's worship, contained in the Common Prayer," is unscriptural; "that any of its thirty-nine articles are in any part superstitious," or "that the Government of

the Church of England, under His or Her Majesty, by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, &c. is repugnant to the word of God;" — as a Church whose alliance with the State hath produced *that cruel and oppressive* "*Act of Uniformity*," yet unrepealed, by which any one who shall speak any thing to the derogation of the Book of Common Prayer, or any thing therein contained, "shall, for the first offence, forfeit a hundred marks; for the second, four hundred marks; and for the third, *all his goods and chattels*, and SHALL SUFFER IMPRISONMENT DURING LIFE!!"

That this Church — having its foundation in Rome, *being a superstructure of ignorance and mystery, of heathenism and Popery* — maintained by worldly riches and power, and guarded *by the sword of persecution* — is, by your petitioners, regarded as part and parcel of that city shadowed forth in prophecy — that great city which hath made merchandise of men's souls, by whose "*sorceries all nations were deceived*" — in which was "found the blood of the Prophets and the Saints," but which God, by his judgments, hath threatened to destroy. That in this spiritual Babylon your petitioners can, as the true worshippers of God, have no lot nor inheritance. Yea, rather than partake of *its abominations*, they are prepared to suffer on the altar of its idolatry, mingling their lives with "the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held."

Viewing the Church of England as part of such a system, of *Political Religion and Corrupt Spiritual Power* — regarding the form of marriage, as contained in the Book of Common Prayer, as one of the rites of such a Church, how can your petitioners conform thereunto? "How" (in the language of Scripture) "can they do this thing, *and sin against God?*" And if, haply, on the grounds of *false doctrines and corrupt practices*, no objections existed against the Established Church, yet will it be evident to your Honourable House that, denying as they do, the authority of *any* established religion — rejecting the claims of *any* priesthood — refusing assent to *all* public social worship — your petitioners stand too widely separated from the Established Church, and indeed from all other re-

ligious bodies, to join in *any* religious act with *any* party — *other than their own — the true Church of God.*

Your petitioners, in addition to these their broad and general grounds of objection against the religion established by law, of which the marriage ceremony forms a part, further and especially object, against that particular ceremony, —

That it makes a religious rite where God has made none: marriage being a *natural and civil right*, which is no where appointed in the Scriptures to be entered upon by means of a religious solemnisation.

That it is a Popish rite, first rendered compulsory in the Church by a corrupt pontiff, as a means of increasing the revenue of the clergy; and that, though nominally not regarded by the Established Church as a Sacrament — or *Mystery*, it is, in substance, and even in terms, made such in the present Church Liturgy.

That, by reason of its origin from the Popish Mass Book, together with the obsoleteness of certain of its terms; *its forms are superstitious*, its meaning has in some instances become obscure, *its assertions false; and its allusions indelicate, offensive, and revolting.*

That the worship connected with this ceremony is *Idolatrous*, the language of prayer being therein addressed to "Christ," who, as the Christ, that is, the Anointed or Messiah, is in Scripture expressly called "the *Man* Jesus," "the Son of Man," and who hath himself proclaimed, "thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

That it is open and avowed *Polytheism*, a plurality of gods being expressly worshipped and separately invoked therein, as "God the Father," "God the Son," and "God the Holy Ghost;" such Polytheism being contrary both to the laws of God and of our country: to the laws of God, by the declaration of the Apostle, that "to us there is but one God, even the Father, of whom are all things;" to the laws of our country, by the 9th and 10th of William III. cap. 32., as amended by the 53d George III. cap. 160., which alteration of the law still leaves exposed to civil disabilities and imprisonment, all persons who shall "maintain that there are *more Gods* than one."

That your petitioners, with these views of the church marriage ceremony, and of the established religion of which it is a part, have ever held it impossible for their members to submit, and to subscribe thereunto on occasion of their marriages, without publicly, and in the face of the established church, protesting against the same.

That the delivery of such protests by your petitioners, together with their refusal to kneel at "the Altar," and repeat certain parts of the marriage service deemed by them to be idolatrous, have exposed your petitioners to great and serious pain and inconvenience; that the marriages of members of their body have been, in consequence sometimes refused, sometimes delayed, sometimes broken off, when partly celebrated, and on one occasion adjourned till a future day. That the members of their body have, in some instances, been kept in the church several hours waiting the completion of the marriage; that in others they have been threatened to be expelled therefrom by civil force, or be handed over to the terrors of the ecclesiastical courts, — those hateful remnants of spiritual tyranny and popish oppression; whilst upon some occasions, indeed, the liberality of the officiating minister hath rendered the situation of your petitioners even the more painful and embarrassing.

That your petitioners implore your Honourable House to put an end to a state of things painful to *all* the parties concerned therein — necessary to no existing interest of the country — compelled by no avowed object or policy of the laws; and affording neither support nor the appearance of support to the religion established by law.

That whereas the right to contract marriages before their own congregations being by law allowed to Jews and Quakers, your petitioners trust it will appear to your Honourable House, from the above statement of their doctrines and principles, that their scruples against conformity with the established religion are as serious and as valid as those entertained by Jews or Quakers; whilst, from the statement of their discipline and church government, it will appear that they are as closely united and as distinct a body as Jews or Quakers, — thus offering to the legislature equal securities against the

performance of clandestine or unlawful marriages. That further evidence can, if required, be offered at the bar of your Honourable House, as to the unity and identity of your petitioners as a body, so as fully to justify and superinduce the conclusion, that, with reference to all the objects of civil society touching the marriage contract, such contracts may be entered into before the people known as "Freethinking Christians," with the same security as those contracted among the people called Quakers, or the members of the Jewish persuasion.

That whilst your petitioners will not venture to dictate to your Honourable House the mode of relief now prayed for, they take leave to state, that, as far as their own body is concerned, the extending to their members the same exemption from the operation of the marriage act as that which is enjoyed by Jews and Quakers, and upon the same principle, or the permitting them to contract marriages before the justices of the peace, as in the days of the Commonwealth, would be a simple process of legislation, and that the same would be satisfactory to your petitioners.

That, regarding marriage as a civil rite, your petitioners seek only to obtain a legal sanction thereto, without a violation of their consciences: they ask this, as the free citizens of a free state,—as Protestants, resisting all spiritual domination, and appealing to the Bible as the great charter of their liberties, — as dissenters, denying the right of the civil magistrate to interfere in religion, or usurp authority over the consciences of men, — as the church of God, bound, like its Master and Head, to "bear witness of the truth," and appealing, in the language of the Apostles, to the rulers of this world, "whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God—judge ye."

That, regarding the connection of religion with the state as the primary cause of the grievance of which your petitioners complain, and deploring the same, as having mainly contributed *to the corruption of revealed religion*, as giving occasion to the infidel and scoffer to speak evil of religion, and above all, as being denounced by the judgments and threatenings of God as made known in the Scriptures; your petitioners, besides

the relief now sought to be obtained, pray your Honourable House *to put an end to the connection between Church and State* — that so the power and simplicity of divine truth may appear — that so the word of God may no longer be blasphemed — that so the judgments of God may peradventure be averted from our country — when "Babylon the Great" shall be had in remembrance, and her sins shall have "reached unto heaven."

That all and several the allegations contained in this petition — whether as regards the grievance sustained by your petitioners, their claims as a true church, or all the matters and things urged against the established religion, and the marriage ceremony, to which they are by law required to conform — your petitioners are prepared to support and prove at the bar of your Honourable House, or before a convocation of the clergy for that purpose assembled; and they pray for such alteration in the law as in the premises shall seem meet to your Honourable House.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

THE END.

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